John Urwich

INSIDE THE SOVIET UNION WITHOUT A PASSPORT

a foreigner's nine-year experience in the death camps of the Soviet empire

JOHN URWICH
(FERRY)

INSIDE THE SOVIET UNION
WITHOUT A PASSPORT

VOLUME II

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Motto:

Good or bad as your deeds may be:
In them, people your nation see.
Ferry

The communists plan to conquer the world. If an enemy power is bent on conquering you and turns all his resources to that end, he is at war with you. Unless you contemplate surrender, you are at war with him. Moreover, unless you contemplate treason, your objective, like his, will be victory.

Barry Goldwater, U. S. Senator

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A people may happily liken themselves, or be likened by others, to an animal — a lion, a vulture, or a cock . . . Russian Communism may be likened to a goat — a goat tied up to a stake and eating up everything around it. At first, standing, then kneeling, its neck outstretched, half choked by a rope, its tongue hanging out and its eyes popping out of their sockets. In this way the goat keeps grazing to the very edge of a precipice. What lies beneath and what lies beyond the stake does not please her, and she lets it alone. She enjoys greedily what she can reach, even the grass of the neighbor.

Russian Communism couldn't care less about Russia herself. She brings no profit to Russia, nor does she take any pleasure in Russia. She grazes happily at the edges of her feeding grounds: in Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Turkey, Greece, Iran . . . When the first crop of grass is completely exhausted, then her rope stretches, and she stares out at China, Indonesia, Scandinavia, Western Europe — Spain, France, Italy, Belgium, Holland. Then, when these are consumed, she spins around her stake — in Moscow.

Gabriel M. Boutsen, from *Das Blaue Tal*

PANSLAVISM

When one looks at all the nationalities that people the Soviet death camps, and when he considers the nature of the relationships that grow up there, he will notice the deep and common contempt turning into hatreds; the old, unextinguished animosity between Poles and Russians, between Ukrainians and Russians. All Slavs. But Pan-Slavism? Why wipe out these hatreds which centuries of uprisings and bloody reprisals have intensified to unbelievable proportions? The same reciprocal contempt exists between Lithuanians and Russians, between Finns and Russians. In turn, Poles and Ukrainians in these camps avoided each other and intensely despised each other, even though oppressed by the same Russian hangmen.

These were the large groups which provided the peculiar framework and which dominated the colorations of life in the camps. The quarrels and the brawls and the killings were commonplace in this silent war here between the Russians, on one side, and Poles, Ukrainians, Finns, Latvians, Estonians, and Lithuanians on the other side. These misunderstandings were, of course, exploited by the leaders of the K. G. B.

The rest of the population in the camps was, as I have said before, a multinational motley that exemplified very eloquently the massive protest outside within the nations caught in the hideous tentacles of the gigantic Soviet octopus: Georgians, Armenians, Romanians from Bukovina and Bessarabia (recently seized from Romania) or from the Moldavian territory between Dniester and Bug. Turkomans, Bashkirs, Kalmuks, Mongols, Kazakhs, Komi, Iranians, Chuvashes, Ainu, Nenets, Chechens, etc. — that constitute all the conglomerate of nations; then also Japanese, Chinese, Manchurians, Turks, Frenchmen from Indochina, Belgians, Danes from the German army, Italians, Yugoslavs, Greeks, Bulgarians, Czechs, Moravians, Slovenes, Ruthenians, and Spaniards (more about the Spaniards later). In other words, a modern Babel.

Some of the prisoners from the Soviet Union itself were criminals, thieves and burglars. But, as I mentioned before, these had certain provisos attached to their sentences that could change any common criminal into a political prisoner. With the help of these criminals, the Soviet authorities could play all their dirty games and maneuver penal policy by using this diversity of

detainees so as to create a permanent atmosphere in which they could fix a borrowed or imposed attitude. From among these criminals, the Soviet authorities recruited the most skilled diversionary agitators and provocateurs.

Political detainees were: those who had collaborated with the enemy in the now occupied countries; informers who had worked for the enemy; rebels and protestors from occupied territories or even from the Soviet capital city itself. All these were looked upon as enemies of Communism and of the Soviet people and as traitors and spies. But there were also traitors of another kind, namely those who had beaten up, cursed, or rebelled against an abusive president of a kolkhoz, or collective farm; or those who had committed acts of sabotage or who had stolen from Soviet state property. Into this category also were placed those guilty of manslaughter, ordinary theft, assault or abuse of a Communist Party member or any representative of Soviet authorities.

Also classfied as political detainees were those prisoners of war who dared insult Soviet authorities in the prison camps where they had been interned, and prisoners of war who had tried to escape, or had served in the gendarmerie of the enemy army, or had served as military or civilian police in the enemy army, or as civilian clerks administering the territories occupied during the war by the German or the Romanian armies in the Ukraine, Byelorussia, the Crimea, the Caucasus, Kuban, the Baltic States, Bukovina, and Bessarabia.

Also considered to be political detainees were those sentenced for war crimes or for plundering in the territories occupied by the German and Romanian armies; and foreign citizens who had been detained and then shipped to camps by the O. S. court.

Finally, a last category altogether special: internees belonging to two different groups — one, Soviet citizens (their national origin did not matter) suspected of not being loyal to the Communist Party, the Soviet government, and the "Soviet people" (after being turned in by a "benevolent" informer). A simple joke, a voiced protest, a muttering of discontent at a party over a glass of wine or at work, etc., reaching K. G. B. headquarters would be enough for an immediate arrest and shipping to a camp for political internees. Here the internee was usually held for an unlimited period of time, without being sentenced, until some new event (such as an order for release, usually temporary) came. The truth is that once a person was detained, he remained a suspect for good. Here there was also

the possibility of "administrative punishment" for five to ten years. When such a term expired, the punishment was not over. Instead of freedom, the detainee often was surprised with an "administrative extension" for another three, five, or ten years. And so, on and on, without any given reason. The administrative mill kept on rolling, crushing people with extended surprises.

In the new theory of Vishinsky & co, there was an astonishing simplification regarding human rights. The new builders would do as they pleased, all the while standing in front of the world singing, in different tunes, songs about the freedom of peoples, about humanity and human rights. Of course, these rights never applied to the Soviet Union.

An interesting case, around 1955, in Vladimirsk, was that of a former prince in Tsar Nicholas II's court. This man had been imprisoned in different Soviet camps since 1917. The only attention paid him was to notify him every ten years about the extension of his "administrative detention." The only justification given was that he was "suspected of being disloyal to the new social political system of the country." This man had been locked up alone in his cell for thirty years. At this time he was now rather incapacitated and had to be walked out in the open air by another detainee. In 1955 he had had thirty-eight years of administrative detention and was over ninety years old!

The second group of administrative internees were prisoners formerly sentenced but not set free after the expiration of their original sentences because they were still suspect. Therefore they were automatically privileged to receive political administrative detention — in accordance with the principle of the endless bolt thread.

The difference between the two groups was merely one of timing: Those belonging to the first group had been suspect originally; those in the other group "became" suspect after their original sentencing.

In some instances, after a certain number of administrative extensions of their punishment, the detainees were set free but had to live in an area of restricted access. This was the "forced residence." Usually the place was in the same locality or the zone of the prison from which the detainee had been released. These detainees and the political internees would make up the population of the settlement to be built here.

Some luckier detainees, because of some unexpected circumstances or because of countless complaints, and after repeated

administrative punishments, were presented with "apologies" when they were released: "You know, there was a small misunderstanding!" Or, "Well, it was a mistake, or rather, a mistaken interpretation of the law by the questioning body. But those responsible received exemplary punishment!"

As far as life in this camp was concerned, I can say that it was not very much different than life in the other prison camps that I had passed through, except for the severe weather and the terrible work in the mines. The strategic elements in this camp were controlled by hardened criminals and by informers who were also ordinary thieves. To be sure, there was nothing holy about them. They had the authority from the K. G. B. and from the administration. However, sometimes these two authorities came into conflict and secretly plotted against each other. Each had its own source of information, and so the lives of the prisoners were poisoned in different ways. There were plenty of bosses: barrack chiefs, kitchen chiefs, tea chiefs, *kasha* or broth chiefs, soup chiefs, washing room chiefs, bathroom chiefs, drying room chiefs, infirmary chiefs, work brigade chiefs, day and night chiefs, water-carrying chiefs, bread chiefs, donkey-cart chiefs, library chiefs . . . Chiefs, chiefs, and chiefs. And you had to be on guard in a special way with each chief, since each had his own peculiar character and work strategy.

In one of the small camps, the so-called rehabilitation camps to which only human wrecks were sent and which had only 120 bunks and only 30 people who could work, in this camp the number of chiefs was 90, and they would eat up the rations of the 30 working prisoners. The sum total of food supplies in kilograms was for 120 people. No more, no less — 120. But the chiefs did not eat from the same kettle into which the food for the "multitude" was poured.

I could not say that the ratio between the number of those who work only and eat almost nothing, and the number of chiefs who eat a lot is one to three in the whole of the economic structure of the Soviet Union, because I could not verify it. However, in our camp, the rest of the economic structure of the Soviet Union was obviously mirrored. But let us get back to our smaller world, where every move could be observed with the naked eye, without intervening statistics, without intermediary commentators — where everyone could be called by name, by nationality; where everyone knew how many teeth the other one had in his mouth.

In this camp, with thirty bees and ninety drones (under the

protection of the K. G. B. and the administration), the situation was as follows: For ten sick people in the infirmary there were five male nurses and two physicians with no medical instruments and no medicine or drugs. For ninety volumes of political books there were seven librarians who prepared a wall gazette. Any new privileged position meant another criminal or informer. Whenever a cunning informer showed up but could not replace someone else in a privileged position, a new position was created or some serious shifts with replacements in the hierarchy were made. This small camp — formerly a monastery — was a jewel! It had a commander, a short red-headed warrant officer. He carried on a private business in the camp. Among other things, through intermediaries, he sold us *mahorka* (Russian tobacco), in exchange for our bread, which he sold on the black market at a profit. By trade he was a stove maker. His name was Makiev and he was not on too good terms with the political officer. But in this deserted place, abandoned by God, the two did whatever they pleased. They played God and had their own network of informers. Complaints were never followed up. In fact, there was no one to complain to. At headquarters? Over there they were all devils — especially the two colonels: the administrator, Grishchuk, and the political one, Vatsurin, nicknamed "the Bedbug."

Justice was administered by hardened criminals with the blessing of Soviet authorities. It consisted of incarcerations and cutting in half the rations of bread and water.

Here, in Camp 9, until the end of 1950, we did not get mattresses, bed sheets, or pillows. We slept fully clothed, covering ourselves with whatever we could lay our hands on. Our camp was approximately two degrees beyond the Arctic Circle, somewhere between the 67th and 68th parallels. Those who did not have their personal clothes any more were given one set of underwear, one pair of trousers, one cloth coat lined with cotton, and one pair of overshoes made from trouser cloth and having rubber soles.

The barracks had double wooden walls. In between the walls was wet mud. These barracks were built at ground level. (In other camps we lived in huts half buried in the ground.) Inside the barracks were two rows of superimposed bunks. The distance between the top and the lower bunk was a little more than the distance of a normal man's trunk and head when he sat up on the lower bed. In rooms with higher ceilings (in other camps), there were three to four beds, one on top of the other; and in

the celebrated Oransk Monastery near Moscow, there were seven superimposed bunks. Climbing into bed there was truly an alpinist's task, working from a table supported by wooden boards tied together with ropes and properly distanced as if constructed by Archimedes himself.

The density of the population in one of these barracks varied between two hundred and four hundred persons. In some barracks — for example, in the so-called jungle barracks number 45 — the number of tenants was more than four hundred and fifty, not to mention those in the chapel and the main building of the Convent 7074, where in one single room, on seven rows of superimposed beds, 1500 detainees and prisoners slept, one next to the other, packed up like sardines in cans. Of course, such a life style could only provoke loathing and fear. Could there be anything more abhorrent? To be able to turn in bed only at a signal, everybody at the same time! Not to be able to take a spoonful of broth without its being counted by a neighbor, or being watched by ten or twenty or even more pairs of eyes! To know everything about your bedfellows, to see and smell everything around you, coming from welcome or unwelcome bedfellows, day and night, for weeks, for months, for years in a row. These are the things that devour you, wear you out, that dull you and destroy the last remaining hoops on your barrel. The last remaining staves shrink and crumble.

In such conditions it was natural that there were four or five crimes a day. In fact it would be a surprise if there were none. Usually the quarrels and the most bloody confrontations, sometimes in gangs, took place between the groups of common criminals, who avoided each other when in the same room. However, if they did happen to meet face to face, knives were drawn . . .

Regardless of how brutal they were, those criminals who led the gangs avoided any confrontation with the K. G. B. Usually they avoided the officialdom and operated on their own. They also could not stand the so-called "Dogs," that is, the obedient tools of the political officers, under whose covert leadership they really operated.

Later on, after becoming acquainted with the criminal organization and the underhanded dealings in these camps, I realized that most of these gangs differed among themselves by the way they dressed, other than the fur caps that they all wore. Apparently the cap was a style inherited from the civil war of 1917. But some wore these caps with a red flat top; others

had black flat tops or other colors.

From their stories, I often heard mention of a secret association called "the Black Hat," from which I gathered those who wore the black hats derived that practice, to set them apart from the Dogs, who sported another color and claimed to have their roots in the 1905 revolutionaries. I was briefly and quickly told that the fights between these two groups were nothing but a continuation of the conflicts between the Reds and the Whites, the two revolutionary groups in the 1905 rebellion against the Tsar.

There was also a neutral faction of the so-called *Mahnovi*, who played the red or the white tune but only after ascertaining which gang was stronger at the moment.

Besides these three groups, which included only Russians (to be more precise, the scum of the Russian prisoners), there was a multitude of parasites and thieves who had not enlisted in any of the above gangs and who would take advantage of any general turmoil and confusion to make their hit, leaving a poor unfortunate stark naked in the frosty winter time, or stealing his food ration from under his nose. Having no shame or pangs of conscience, these masters of countless tricks did not stop at anything. They would go as far as to snatch bread from another's hand and run away with it. Sometimes they would attack the delivery men who carried the food from the kitchen to the barracks, and seize the bread rations for thirty or forty prisoners, and sometimes even the pail with the broth. I should like to point out that the camp was huge, and that these hits were made from secluded spots and during the full polar night.

Sometimes, however, the hits were made in the clear light of day. After the first such experiences, the hijacking of food was done under a powerful escort made up of the stoutest men armed with clubs. We lived as if we were in the forest, where a beast might jump you from anywhere. The K. G. B., the all-powerful K. G. B., never knew anything, and the administration shrugged its shoulders. You just had to defend yourself by yourself. The *Mahnovi* attacked only in full formation and concentrated only on the weak prisoners. If one of the gang happened to be by himself or in a minority, he immediately aligned himself with another stronger gang. As a rule, the *Mahnovi* were the most noted devoted turncoats, gossipers idle all day long and plotting all kinds of evils.

As to food, in spite of the fact that the *Mahnovi* did not go

into the mine pits and did no work, they had the best kind of food coupons, that is, those allotted to prisoners who did the most difficult jobs.

It was difficult to penetrate the secrets of these groups of thugs, who were essentially of the same mold regardless of their different, assumed names. The wisest thing to do was to stay away from them, because the moment they had the slightest suspicion that you knew too much and could ruin their plans, you could consider yourself a dead one. In order to defend ourselves against their surprise attacks, we had to close our ranks, but this was strictly forbidden and severely punished. Anyone could turn you in or squeal, and the result was the transfer from one barracks to another, from one brigade to another, or even from one camp to another. The K. G. B. did not do this to the Dogs, the criminal bosses, or to the *Mahnovi*, in whose business they did not meddle except when it was in opposition to authority or in disregard of any orders or if it endangered too much the Soviets' aims or interests.

There was just one single case when a rebel dared defy the K. G. B. for months. The K. G. B. placed a reward on his head because they could not catch him and get him out of camp, no matter how hard they tried. The Soviets even ordered all the prisoners out of the prison and sent in groups of soldiers with automatic rifles to "clear the place as in wartime."

It was indeed a "thrill" to live together with such individuals, especially in the Arctic Circle. Whose product were they anyway? Of the landed bourgeoisie? Of the American beasts? Did the Americans drop them there from airplanes, as they had the Colorado bugs?

METHODS AND THE GOLDEN HUNGER

We had to form into groups. But our relationships and friendships were under suspicion by the K. G. B. Unexpected and brutal separations followed, because the K. G. B. had information and kept files on each individual. The Dogs and both small and big turncoats, as well as the camp "chiefs" of different ranks, were always on the watch. Had they nothing to do, they would have undermined each other. All this devilish machinery strove to break relationships up and make individuals stay away from each other, to divide them spiritually, and to destroy their trust in each other. Agents provocateurs swarmed

around us. They made their own enquiries. They weighed what they observed. Nothing was overlooked. Each prisoner had a separate file with each agent. Somewhere, at headquarters, all this information was put together and conclusions were drawn. If there was anything doubtful, other agents and other provocateurs at a different level, stepped in . . . And this was done until all the data was weighed and confirmed. In some very special cases, the whole information network concentrated on a single case. When the K. G. B. wanted something, it had to get it. It had the means. And the means were inexhaustible.

When the K. G. B. focused in on an individual whom they considered to be more stubborn or more sophisticated, it would unleash the privileged, paid agents against him (at the price of body and blood), and there had to be results. The agents provocateurs went into full swing. They attempted to ingratiate themselves with the victim (if the agent was himself not already recruited from among the victim's closest friends). And this was so the victim would not suspect anything. However, it did happen.

The agents would talk to him very freely. They would curse the political officers, the chiefs from the smallest to the biggest. They even cursed Stalin, if you please . . . Of course, the agent started gradually so as not to arouse suspicion. In fact, it was normal to curse the Soviets, to vent one's anger on them for all the abuses and for the futilities of the Revolution and the masquerade that had followed it; for all the formalities, for all the tyranny; for the killing of the soul and the distortion of elementary truths. It was natural to curse them when you were with a friend. But often the friend turned out to be none other than an agent provocateur. He would find out what your thoughts were, and now you became an enemy! And, of course, an enemy of a high calibre and therefore dangerous. So the agent would go to the "master" and turn you in. Exactly as kids do in school, telling their teacher all the trifles. The only difference was that the kids did this out of ignorance, and in good faith.

In a short while, the master would call you in. He would address you in the usual manner. How are you? How is the food? What's new in the camp? What do they talk about? As a rule you pretended ignorance. But the master, that is, the political officer, would prove to you that you were lying. And he would repeat exactly what he knew you had been thinking and saying. Then he would accuse you of concealing facts and of conspiring against law and order in the camp. "Let's see! Oh, yes . . . . .

You were overheard conspiring with your friend X, whom you did not denounce as an enemy of the Soviet Union." The political officer would repeat, word for word, what you had thought, said, and planned. Of course, you would adamantly deny it, even if the next natural step was to beat you up or lock you up to starve in a cell. You would continue to deny it, even confronted with your friend X, who, like yourself, was being locked up in another room, playing the part of the victim driven to despair by hunger, beatings, and incarceration. Your friend X would implore you to admit that you had talked to him, since he could not stand the beatings any longer. (They hit him on the soles until his boots cracked, and since this kind of beating is more painful than other kinds, he confessed to everything you had persistently refused to admit.)

"Now, you see that you lied," the political officer would say. Then a new punishment would follow — real for you, faked but well disguised for the agent (your friend X) so as not to expose him.

The Soviet methods were numerous and varied. Some of these methods were crude, some were refined, but all had the same purpose: destruction of the victim's confidence. By being repeatedly subjected to this kind of torture, even the strongest withdraws into himself, will not talk about anything else except imagined pleasures and nonsense. He does not want to know anything. In other words, his personality falls apart.

I met such a victim, apparently once a strong man, a university professor who had in his head the wisdom of the whole world but who denied ever being a professor (although I knew for certain that he was). At the age of 65, he talked only about his amorous adventures and of drinking parties which we knew he never had had in his life. No one trusted anyone else any more. The honest man could not be distinguished from the scoundrel. Everybody fell into a state of mind which we called "samurai debauchery" after the Japanese samurai who took up drinking and other bad habits, degrading themselves deliberately in order to lull their vigilant enemies to sleep. From such degraded individuals no one could expect warrior virtues. But who could tell if this samurai debauchery here was fake or cowardice or indulgence?

All these Soviet machinations led to discord among the camp inmates. The Soviets did succeed in dividing the people. Exactly as a rotten apple will spoil the other apples in the same basket, in the spiritual lives of individuals here (either separately or

together in groups), lying, baseness, and uncertainty succeeded in driving out truth, courage, and certainty. Much time is needed and much must happen before individuals can recognize the attitudes, temperaments, and characters of such a place. Time is necessary for people to find themselves again, again find those who have goodness in their hearts and to distinguish them from the scoundrels and agents provocateurs.

It was indeed difficult, but the miracle did happen, in spite of the fact that the most sophisticated and rapacious of the informers still remained unexposed. These dregs of Soviet society were indeed horrible. They would count on your good faith and lack of experience, and after selecting you as a victim, manage to entice you to some barracks where their gang was quartered and playing cards, then strip you from head to toe. Then they would say: "The stakes were your green Italian shirt and your German coat. Take them off quickly, because I wagered them in the game and I must hand them over. But maybe we'll have better luck in the next game!"

They would all jump up around you, without shame, and not stop until you took off your clothes. If you resisted, they would strip you by force and you received a beating to boot. In the end they dressed you up in foreign clothes, beautifully colored and of good quality. You ended up liking these new clothes, and, amazed, accepted the exchange. But the game was not over. Once you had left their lair, you were discreetly followed to your sleeping place. Then, in a short while, other thugs — usually two or three from the same gang — would enter your barracks for different reasons, looking around, and then spot you. Meanwhile, the rest of the gang would come in, ready to make trouble. When all the actors were present (including the outside guards), one of the gang would turn to the barracks chief (who seldom was a member of the gang), telling him in a loud voice (so that everyone could hear him), that someone from this barracks had stolen such and such a colored shirt, and such and such colored coat of top quality, and had run away with them. Of course, the barracks chief would deny it: "Impossible! My boys are high class people! Educated, intelligent, refined . . . Not common penguins! But there is no harm in looking around! Be my guest!"

Then one of the scoundrels from the gang would scream, pointing to the victim: "There he is! He stole it! He is wearing my shirt!" The others would join in and identify the incriminating objects. Then the party would begin, and the accused

thief become a live target. He would be pushed, cursed at, hit, kicked — to the astonishment of those around him who had known him as a peaceful person who could not be a thief. But of course they did not now know what to believe.

In the meantime, the gang would start to shout, "Take him to headquarters! No! Take him to the politburo! They'll teach him not to steal any more!" Willy-nilly, the victim was caught in possession of "stolen" goods. The clothes were on him or with him. Formally he could not deny the charge. Who would have believed his version of the story, anyway? Thus, under the very eyes of the barracks chief and of the inmates of the barracks, he would be lifted up for everyone to look at, without anyone intervening on his behalf. His repeated denials at headquarters were useless. He was alone, they were many. He was the defendant, they were the witnesses. And the witnesses would go into details that left the accused breathless. Punishment followed. For a few days only (an innocent man) he was placed in the cell with an ice floor. In case they wanted to set him up for good, for a record in his file after he was released, they would make him stand trial for robbery and theft. This, according to Soviet law, would place him in a new category: From prisoner of war or political detainee he would now be moved into the class of common criminals — a procedure which would result in his being taken off the list of beneficiaries of international agreements.

Now this whole masquerade was the function of the political commissar, to get what he wanted from you. He was the man who set you up and directed the whole game. Now he would have something on you and could frighten you with blackmail. "I won't have you stand trial provided that . . . " "You won't have a criminal record, on condition that you . . ." "I'll get you out scot-free and prove to the whole camp what they have done to you, and the guilty will be punished if you . . . " These were the words by which he would succeed in talking you into becoming his informer. Or he could offer you the position as editor of the wall gazette, in which capacity you were to write dazzling articles dictated by them to support some of their false claims and statements and to sign leaflets which they could drop in your native country, or to enlist you in one of the divisions of volunteers at Riazan or elsewhere, to make statements against your friends, or to fly in an airplane and recognize certain military objectives and point them out on a map, etc., etc. They could ask you to do anything they wanted!

At first they would corner you with trifles, to bring about your first cooperation. Then, to be sure, the big assignments followed, and, in the end, your total collapse. The blackmailing to expose you, coupled with your own sense of shame if pointed out as a milksop, a rotten informer in the hands of the K. G. B. is so threatening that you are now prone to become the most obedient scoundrel.

To the astonishment of those who know you, you start by making speeches in front of former friends, who now avoid you. In those speeches you praise things at which you cursed before. Very few of those who got involved in such a trap ever had the courage to back out. But there were some who did. I recall one such case. At midnight, this man woke up the entire barracks and made a confession in front of everyone. He stated that the political officer had blackmailed him and terrorized him so much that he had given in. He had done what they had asked him to do. He had written articles, signed leaflets, lied, made speeches, given information about friends, and had reported all that he had seen and had then enlisted in a division of volunteers.

"I did all these things but now I suffer for it day and night! I am ashamed that you have now found out all this, but I had to tell you so that you will know about these things first hand. I want you to know because I want to be a free man! I want to be strong again! I do not want to keep this secret from you any more! This is how they blackmailed me and kept asking me to do things for them. With this secret of mine they were strong and I was weak!

"They blackmailed me with my very first statement; they blackmailed me with my signature promising to help the K. G. B.; they blackmailed me with my signature (which they forced from me) by which I swore to become a K. G. B. agent and accepting their statement that any deviation from the fulfillment of my tasks would be punished in accordance with Soviet law and the Interior Regulations of the K. G. B. But the most telling blackmail was fear of my eventual exposure. They kept threatening me that they would tell the whole camp that I was a turncoat, an agent who reported whatever he saw as well as the lies which they ordered me to tell. Now I have told you everything, everything. Yes, right now, in the dead of night when ghosts come out! Let me tell you that in spite of the fact that up to this point I have been a scoundrel, right now, after I have confessed it to you as to a priest, I feel strong. I have freed myself from a big shame! Tomorrow I shall hand over my request to withdraw as a volunteer

from the military division . . . ”

Sometimes the political commissar, his Dogs, and his *Mahnovi* were less ingenious. Through one of their men they would hide some object under your pillow or put something in your coat pocket. Then they would come straight to you for a search; and after the search, based upon what they found there, they would start their game all over again. At other times, their procedures were limited to compromising only the individuals they searched, but also aimed at certain nationalities or groups whom they wished discredited, or wished to be at loggerheads.

This method was successful most of the time, because there were enough fools unable to understand this perfidious game of the K. G. B., and there were enough bad and selfish individuals willing to play their game. But after the inmates acquired more experience and became smarter, things started to turn around. The game of the Dogs and the political commissar began, little by little, to be foiled. It was not easy, and required a great deal of suffering, but the turn-around did happen. The prisoners were in death camps, some of them on death beds, so they did not give a damn if the Soviets killed them. They had to play their last card. And they played it well, no matter the consequences. To work for the Soviets meant death anyway. Since to work against them could also mean death, neutrality was out of the question. By playing this last card against the Soviets and by keeping cool and despising death, you could win . . .

During the typhoid epidemic in 1948 and 1949, the factions of the Dogs and *Mahnovi* had not refrained from trafficking and trading in parts of the human body which were still fleshy — kidneys, livers, and hearts of many of those who died there under the Arctic sky. Without too much concealment but also without too much publicity, human meat was sold in exchange for anything: clothing, bread, cigarettes, *mahorka*, rubles, and, especially, watches, wedding rings, and gold fillings. Gold was indeed in great demand. All of the gold went through the black market of the camp, and from there, through diverse upper channels, it turned into coins that ended up in the pockets of different political commissars, camp commanders, or regional K. G. B. chiefs. Who could pinpoint them? To be sure, however, that was the route taken by the gold. Somewhere into the high echelons. The Soviet rulers liked gold. They also liked rubles. At least one of the names of these beneficiaries was known, and the gold must have been hidden somewhere because it disappeared when the network of the black market was discovered. The

intermediary agent, the political commissar Birman (nicknamed Ionel the American by the camp) was also caught. Most likely, the detainees smelt Birman's weakness for gold. His collaborators, to whom he had given fat jobs, were also discovered. One of them was the chef, Ion Buzea, an artillery lieutenant from Ramnicu-Sarat in Romania. The gang, of course, played a large role, both in the ranks of informers at every level and in the ranks of the outside authorities.

Hunger and lack of tobacco were so acute that anyone who owned a precious object was tempted to trade it in for almost anything, especially since there was always the danger of its being stolen anyway. This actually happened in April or May, 1943, at Mine 8, in the division of mine scaffolding, when German deportees were suddenly attacked and their gold teeth pulled out by force. One of them resisted so they killed him with repeated blows to the head, and then, while he lay dead, they pulled out his gold teeth. It would be interesting to find out how the death of this German deportee was recorded in the registers of the Vorkuta camps. Perhaps the following Romanian prisoners of war could enlighten us: Captain Militaru, former camp chief; Ghionat, Gavalicov, and Costea Ghere (lieutenants who for a long time played dubious roles in the informers' game with gold and close to Colonel Vatsurin, the Bedbug, and to political officers Birman, Kodlear, and Terlesky, who were involved in gold trafficking and subsequently questioned about the value of gold taken out of the mouths of the dead and the living in the camp).

As to the selling of human meat, I found out that this had been done in other camps, too. The group of Italian officers, led by Major Pirelli (nephew of the famous automobile tire manufacturer) knew all about the cannibal, man-eating gangs in the Tambov Camp. This group included Captain Stelio Sansone (attorney who worked for the Italian Ministry of Internal Affairs), Lieutenant Italo Podio from Turin, Lieutenant Bianchi from Milan, Lieutenant Guandgnigni from Sicily. This practice may seem unbelievable, but it actually happened here in the middle of the 20th century, in a country that claims to have the most civilized, progressive and best organized society in the world: the Soviet Union.

IN THE REALM OF FANTASY

Alongside these terrible events which seem to belong to the realm of fantasy, in this world struggling at the very nadir of existence, there were also preoccupations other than the thirst for gold, food recipes, or procuring. There were some human beings who rose above the misery and deprivation of this daily life and who restrained the beast within them. From their ration of fat, some of them would make rushlights by which they could read history, drama, philosophy, or could indulge in painting, sculpture, or drawing; or compose music, or make musical instruments or watches with toothed wheels. Sometimes these individuals sold their shirts, mantles, or their tiny slice of bread and surreptitiously obtained — with the help of the big network of smugglers or traffickers — paper, birch bark (if they could not obtain paper), bricks (from which they could make ink), and writing instruments.

To give you an example: Some of them translated from Romanian into different languages (English, German, French, Japanese, etc.) some of the most treasured works of Romanian literature. I read the ballad "Mioritza" in German and in Italian in the Vorkuta death camp. I saw poems by the Romanian poets Eminescu and Arghezi translated into these same languages. Some of these latter poems made such an impression that a few Germans, Italians, and Japanese began to work hard on new translations in verse in their own languages, doing some deep study of these poems with the help of some knowledgeable Romanians.

I recall the persistence of a Romanian, Mihai Raducanu, who after finding out that there was a former German actor in the camp who knew by heart both parts of Goethe's *Faust*, followed the actor around and did not give up until he dictated to him the entire work. Then for three and a half years, Raducanu conducted lectures and discussions on Goethe's work, and finally translated it into Romanian. In this translation he strove to use the same vowels so as to capture the intonations, inflexions, and pitch of the original as well as Gounod's version.

Raducanu could often be seen reading his Romanian version and the German original to a group of German scholars in order to see if they could identify a scene in which Goethe had used a specific kind of rhyme.

And these more productive individuals lived in the same conditions of misery, hunger, and death! What inner strength made them capable of holding their barrels together? What took place within the soul of this one man when a Soviet bestial claw confiscated and destroyed (during a search when he did not have time to hide it), all this endeavor of years and years! Like Archimedes, whose circles in the sand were destroyed by invading Romans in a different century! What a stupid mankind!

There is another very unusual detail to this story. Out of the total number of years which it took this man to labor over his translation of Goethe's *Faust*, he reserved eight days — yes, he interrupted his work — to take part in the hunger strike by eight hundred Romanians in 1947. Over three thousand German officers, prisoners in Camp 7074: Generals Heine (from Hanover) and Schmidt (from the group of twenty-five German generals there at that time), the captain of the Hamburg-Yokohama cruiser, old Lieutenant Klee and Sudeten Korony, Colonel Wolfmayer from Steierdorf, Austria — all could give interesting details regarding this daring group who unanimously decided on mass suicide to give Soviet authorities a headache and succeeded in baffling and alarming everyone at the K. G. B. headquarters.

In this same camp, the pragmatic and entrepreneurial spirit of the best Romanians provided both the other detainees and the Soviets living outside the camp, an instrument of light, a lamp. In these places they had lived in darkness, or at best, by rushlight. This is unbelievable in the 20th century, but this fact can be verified and even a Soviet panderer cannot deny it. The Romanians made their lamp out of some cans imported from the United States (and on which the Russian word *tushonka* was written) and out of glass fragments cut with a diamond ring belonging to cavalry Lieutenant Carstea. This is how the Soviets got their lamp. It was built in a very funny style, but its light brightened many souls.

Though it was hard work, this same group of innovators managed to give us electric lighting by a strange cross of a windmill and an artificial waterfall in a lake, using a German airplane engine. (The airplane had fallen somewhere out on the field, and at the insistence of the camp's prisoners, the authorities had allowed it to be carried into the camp. The other engine was used by the Romanians to make an engine-driven sledge, to the astonishment of the taiga natives.)

But the most incredible accomplishment was the making

of an artificial hand for a Soviet officer attached to this camp, who had lost his left hand. The artificial hand was made from tin waste, rusted nails, and some special material that could stretch, taken from the top of an officer's cap. It looked like a real hand, with fingers that could be moved as desired. It could grab and hold tight the handlebars of a bicycle or a steering wheel, and even carry weights up to fifteen kilograms. Its maker, Mircea Balaban, had worked as an engineer at the I. A. R. aircraft works in Brasov, Romania.

I recall the clocks made of birchwood axles and toothed wheels, built by the attorney Hilohi, who used only tiny knives and chisels, also made from birchwood and material normally used for making cloth caps. This clock showed the hour, the minute, the day, the week, the month, and the year. All these inventions had to be protected from humidity because the wood would swell at the slightest contact with drops of water. Other marvels were wood zippers, pipes, guitars, violins, cellos, a double bass, and dulcimers.

As a result there were improvised orchestras, made up of individuals who wanted to learn to play instruments, persons such as Negutiu and Haralambie Papadopol. There were also sculptors and painters, composers, and theatrical people, who, here in the most terrible misery found true vocations. These marvels had been accomplished here at the very nadir of human existence, accomplished by warm-hearted persons, full of understanding, able to discipline themselves, dedicated to serious preoccupations, and looking to the future. Such people give everything and ask nothing in return.

NARCOTICS AND SEX

In this lowest of human existences there were other activities — some of them ugly and degrading. For example, there was the traffic of drugs. Could anyone imagine the existence of such a traffic here in the Arctic Circle under the tight control of the Soviets? How and from where did the hashish, morphine, and marijuana come? Through the parcels and letters allowed twice a year? Or was it through an arrangement with the political officer in charge of the post office? Anything was possible. However, no one was interested enough to investigate, and headquarters did not take any measures against this kind of smuggling, even though informed. Whom did the bread, clothing,

or personal objects traded from the miserable addicts enrich?

For the most part, the narcotics addicts were the most powerful and influential people in the camp: the hardened criminals, the Dogs, and those who worked for the Soviet authorities. They were the only ones who could afford such a luxury of the privileged class. They were the ones who traded in goods and information, and were guilty of the abuses under the sympathetic eyes of the highest beneficiary: any of the officialdom, from the lowly guards to the big shots.

From the few facts I gathered, I guessed that the top dealers in hashish were a few Georgians, Armenians, and Turkomans who had lost any human goodness because of the very nature of their business. I could also assume that the same people were those who trafficked in human flesh. Unbelievable as it may seem, in these death camps there was also that huge traffic of human flesh that satisfied the cravings of sex. Such a natural need turned into a problem because it did not exist for most prisoners with their prolonged undernourishment, but it was very acute for the overnourished individuals working within the network of the authorities and those spoiled by certain privileges. Each chief, higher or lower — brigade leader, chef, informer, or any other beneficiary of special food rationing that gave him spare energy — had to have a "protege." Because of their position, some chiefs could afford strictly private "proteges" who were zealously guarded from the lust of strangers' eyes and kept secluded in their own harem.

Others with less powerful positions made use of the common "proteges," prostitutes who could be borrowed, leased, traded in, or taken by force when any other stratagem or enticement failed. Indeed, here in the Arctic Circle were the same bad habits as in the free world. The young "proteges" of this human flesh network were, as you may have already guessed, young males who were just beginning to show signs of a beard. In plain English, homosexuality flourished among all the pashas in the camp, without exception.

Support of a personal sweetheart, or the luxury of amorous intercourse arranged by a panderer was very expensive. Therefore, here, as anywhere and anytime in Soviet society, such a privilege could be afforded only by high-ranking individuals and by the powerful. Even the small fish, who lacked scruples as much as the big shots in camp, know how to speculate skillfully, to feed with devilish ingenuity on the vices, desires, weaknesses, needs, and even the virtues of people in trouble. So even some

small fish could afford the same pleasures as the big shots, except on a reduced scale and at a lower quality.

Generally, this perverted sex could be satisfied at all levels, depending on the ability of the individual to make connections and amass the wherewithal by taking advantage of opportunities, often created by himself, sometimes appearing out of nothing. On such occasions the wicked individual, aware of his power, intoxicated by that power, became insensitive, disgusting, unbearable, and tyrannical.

In these small settlements, life could be constantly watched. Everything was visible, could be found out quickly and directly. Yes, everything was known in detail. And man was revealed as disgusting, especially as the mean, tyrannical, obtuse man who is beginning to feel that he has power. How clearly outlined are the flaws of states as reflected in such small settlements! This creeping, putrid structure rising in front of your eyes. You can see it as if it were in the palm of your hand! For example, the openness of the repeated calls to the K. G. B. office and to the office of the political officer, by Doctor Kraus (if I recall his name exactly), former head of Hitler Youth in Hanover and presently chief (appointed by the Soviets) of the Anti-Nazi Group of the paramilitary information center of the "Free Germany Organization"! One could see this bedbug, more beast than physician, making his venomous daily calls.

One could observe the consultations given by the German General von Paulus to the Russians, followed by solitary walks and hunting trips. (After his testimony against his former colleagues at the Nuremberg trials, he was despised even by the youngest sublieutenants.) One could observe how the Romanian Captain Vladimir Chiritescu, formerly an officer of the Romanian Army Corps of Engineers, walked, personally and directly and insolently, carrying his huge kettle, straight to the kitchen in order to get his fill of extra rations — a right he had won for his "exceptional merits" as an informer. He was getting this extra food for the conscientiousness with which, weeks in a row, secluded in the political commissar's office since 1942, he had redrawn the plans of the Romanian fortifications and armored enclosures in the River Prut, plans originally drawn by himself before the war.

There were seven librarians, fat as those fish fed on corpses in an artificial lake near the camp, who fed those detained in the camp with the contents of a few volumes of confused political-philosophical polemics, of which, in spite of all

endeavor, one could not understand a single phrase. Like other stool pigeons, these librarians filled each of their dinner pails with a ration of food as big as that for thirty regular prisoners, a ration on top of which was added fat, much more than was contained in the whole of the regular cauldron. One could see Colonel Grishchuk's boy (Colonel Grishchuk was the commander of Camp 7074) in his border guard uniform, who had been brought here from Moscow and "anointed" chauffeur — considered indispensable for a truck which never ran but brought here to bless the women of that locality with his virile youth.

One could see the traces of jealousy and youthful revenge (as well as bourgeois prejudice) in the political commissar Terlesky: The gate and the fence of the house where the lady commissar and interpreter of German into Russian lived had been smeared with tar one night because she would not share Terlesky's bed.

There was a female chef in the hospital kitchen, and female physicians and nurses, who sneaked out through the back door with fish or butter hidden in their underwear, with the help of the prisoner-chef — the handsome Sever, one of the fashionable scoundrels of the camp. Yes, a scoundrel both elegant and always well fed. It was well known that all medical inspectors and the medical commission from the regional headquarters at Nizhni-Novgorod went directly to the kitchen, where they tasted — until their bellies were full — all the best food, which, of course, never found its way into the prisoners' cauldron.

It was also well known that in order to conceal the stealing of many foods sent from the United States and in order to explain the missing thousands of cans of powdered milk, sardines, Manchurian caviar, and other foodstuffs, the kitchen made its own kind of broth and soup: "Manchurian caviar soup," "egg powder soup," etc. It was understood that there was no need to count the goods as long as they were recorded on paper. And the papers were always in order. Those "few hundred boxes," which, the camp administration claimed, had been opened and their contents poured into the cauldron after signatures by the commissars and committees (including those of the "representatives of the prisoners," appointed, of course, by the political commissars), were seen wandering through the black market or ending up in the households of the camp leaders and the inspectors, in spite of the fact that the signatures after signatures confirmed that every bit of the contents of the food boxes had

been consumed in the camps.

The signatories were the chiefs, the cooks, the medical personnel, the supervisors, and all the multitude of officers vested by the K. G. B. with the power and the willingness to participate in this dirty game with supplies that were stored only in the K. G. B. depots or storehouses. The big wolves shared their power with the smaller wolves, in order to guard the sheep! And who among the detainees or prisoners could in good faith deny that he smelled the faint odor of herring, sardines, or egg powder in the broth he had eaten? To have soup made from such rarity as Manchurian caviar was indeed something! On the record, we did have this kind of soup. We could not prove there was not a faint trace of caviar in it.

The United States, France, England, and other states paid for each day of confinement of some of their citizens, in money which was to provide meals comparable to those served at the best restaurants. They also paid for sleeping accommodations comparable to those in special hotels. Were these goodies and comforts for these privileged few? The Soviets had the records that said yes — records signed by all the lackeys of their network that specialized in dealings with each nation. But the Soviet superstructure extended still farther. The number of officials and of departments was endless. Communist Party spirit created positions and took care of all those who went out of their way to admire this emperor's new clothes.

There was Loni Teodorescu, who for the time being had been given a small position of authority — chopping wood for the kitchen and for the boiling of tea — and then, later on, upon his return to Romania, given a further reward, as Rector of the Institute of Physical Education in Bucharest. Then, too, the finicky illegitimate son of the deceased Romanian writer Constantin Stere (who in 1917 had published the pro-German newspaper *Lumina*) — the fragile and obscure George Stere — was raised to the position of Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Bucharest.

When one considers all this, he cannot help but ask, "How come such a person, claiming as his excuse the need to survive, how come a filthy worm like Loni Teodorescu, who bent over backwards to play the Soviet game, informing, joining anti-Nazi groups (he, the former Nazi supporter), signing posters and propaganda leaflets to be dropped from Soviet airplanes — how could he bark Romanian patriotic speeches and preside over a new generation of Romanian students as rector of a university

institute?

What else can I do?" Teodorescu used to shout. "I left behind a young wife. I cannot die of hunger here, and let her sleep in someone else's arms!"

And, indeed, Loni Teodorescu did not die of hunger! Neither did Laurentiu Fulga, nor Radu Rapeanu, nor Lambrino, nor Teclu (the future communist general of the Romanian army); nor Nicolae Tutoveanu (future Minister of Defense in communist Romania), nor Cambrea and others. In their place those died whose food rations were snatched away by these sharks in human shape!

The leaflets signed by these scum told how well they had been treated by the Soviets, about their staying at hotels and dining at restaurants where they had been served by waiters. Such indeed were the conditions at Vladimir Camp, especially designed for such turncoats, where foreign delegations were brought to show off how prisoners of war live in the U. S. S. R. These men were the signatories of those leaflets that talked about a kind of paradise which their fellow nationals could also enjoy in case they gave up fighting against the Soviet Union.

There were plenty of individuals like Loni Teodorescu, Cambrea, von Paulus, Laurentiu Fulga, George Stere, and Kraus! Many a scoundrel wanted to survive at any price, even if he had to sell out his own grandmother! Take, for instance, Laurentiu Fulga, this pond carp, who wants to bless his Romanian nation with his tasteless trash which he and the Communist Party call "literary writings." This same Fulga once soiled paper as a paper correspondent for the propaganda battalion of Marshall Antonescu, the pro-Nazi dictator of Romania between 1940 and 1944. But in the Russian camp he continued to be a writer, this time, however, for a communist wall gazette in our camp.

This scoundrel was always ready with propaganda, no matter for whom or for what purpose. He had this fiendish compulsion to spread lies and always aspired to the top position as head louse. And he kept on writing. To please his masters of today, he would fling mud at his masters of yesterday. From what I read on the wall gazette at the camp, I imagined he would curse himself for not having enough mud to soil his country's past and for being short of dithyrambs to praise the greatness of the Soviet communist world where good fate carried him so far.

It is difficult to imagine how much impudence may lurk in the soul of one tortured by hunger and the fear of death, or

in the soul of one unnoticed by history — enough to make him create the moral and physical morass into which he would wade with such happiness. His false writings, his untrue assertions, translated by other Soviet servants into all the languages of the world, and certified by his own testimony — these writings to misinform and fool people! There are many Laurentiu Fulgas, Teclus, and Lambrinos in all nations! And their writings and their testimonies continue to be used as documentary evidence of a certain kind of history.

Hungarians, Italians, Austrians, Germans, etc., all have their Fulgas. All these scoundrels — be they Spaniards, Poles, Finns, or Japanese — wrote in their own wall gazettes (always under the protection of the K. G. B., and printed with the help of central officialdom in Moscow), wrote that for the first time in their lives they now had the chance to see true care for men, and for the first time to hear about the advances with the paratyphoid shots. With a single voice they would impudently broadcast the news that the darkness of bourgeois capitalist society had not yet discovered this miracle shot which immunized against typhus. All this in spite of the fact that typhus was playing havoc here in our death camp, under their very eyes. But the uneducated natives as well as the Soviet medical service must have been profoundly impressed by these repeated accounts of Soviet medical accomplishments!

I cannot think of anything that these petty flatterers did not obfuscate and surround with a mystique in order to please their new masters. They never wrote about their own mental powers being dulled by their greed for broth, broth taken from others who were entitled to it as an elementary right. They never wrote about the high positions dangled before their eyes, in promise of a bright position of leadership in their native countries, under the wing of the Soviets.

They did not write about their commitments in writing, locked up in the iron safes of the K. G. B., with which they would be blackmailed in case they attempted to refuse assignments or refrained from doing that which they were being ordered to do. They did not write anything about their own humiliation. They did not write anything about the hundreds of thousands who died from typhoid fever and malnutrition in the death camps of Lebediansk, Bechetovka, Serafimovich, Potma, Gorky, Norilsk, Karaganda, Uhta, Vorkuta. They did not write anything about the deliberate starving of free nations, about the homeless children whom one met along the unpaved roads of Mother Russia.

"How are you doing, kid?" we would ask.

"Bad," would be the answer of the little boy.

"Why bad?" we would ask again.

"Because there is no bread. There is no bread, no meat, no fat . . We don't have anything to eat! Do you call this life?" the little boy would say.

These are words spoken by children between the ages of seven and fifteen. These words had been heard by Fulga, Kraus, Lambrino and the others. When they went out from the camps in convoys, they themselves used to give salted fish heads or smelling anchovies to these little vagrants as they swarmed around the convoys and begged in chorus: "Gimme a fish-head! Gimme a fish-head!"

I should like to relate a much pondered-over event told to me by Mihai Raducanu: "Our long and slowly moving convoy of prisoners in threadbare clothes passed along the outskirts of a little town. We had on us some bread scraps which we started to give out to begging children. One of them said to me: 'Don't give this boy anything!' 'Why not? He is little like you and must grow up,' we said. 'Don't give him anything! Don't!' These were his exact words. 'He is Jewish!' "

Interesting! These children already knew how to discriminate. There was a certain atmosphere, although we were not in Hitler's Germany but in a communist state where racial hate — as the Soviets trumpeted it over the world — had been rooted out of every soul in Russia. Even today the words of that little kid ring in my ears: "Don't give him anything! He is Jewish!"

All this happened early in 1943 in the first socialist state of the world, a state which was still fighting the Nazis because they, the Nazis, practiced racial hatred.

But Fulga, Lambrino, and the others never wrote about these things. They said nothing about these events, in spite of the fact that they could see much suffering with their own eyes. They did not write about the tragedy of the Spanish children or the tragedy of the Spanish adults that had been freed from German camps and taken into Soviet camps. They did not write about those few French prisoners forcibly removed from defeated Germany to Russia. (In Nazi Germany they had at least been allowed to move about freely on their word of honor that they would not try to run away and would fulfill the tasks assigned in positions they accepted upon conditions and certain preset restrictions.)

Fulga, Lambrino, and the others wrote nothing about the deaths of almost the entire Italian Army Corps in the Tambov

Camp. They did not bother to write — in exchange for a pack of tobacco and an extra cup of broth — about the pro-Soviet German voluntary corps "Free Germany," the Italian "Garibaldi Division" (composed of a few hundred camp survivors), the white-red-white Austrian "Osterreich Division," the Hungarian "Lajos Kossuth Division," the Romanian "Tudor Vladimirescu" and "Horia Closca, and Crisan" divisions, the Czech and Polish divisions. They did not write about the prisoners from the Baltic states or the Japanese prisoners. They did not tell who made up these paramilitary units and if their numbers justified classifying them with the impressive titles of "army corps" and "divisions." They did not write how, little by little, the Soviets recruited future camp chiefs (and users of narcotics and privileged with paramours) from among these well-fed collaborators.

These future "beneficiaries" of these pleasures or traffickers in human flesh were, in a certain order of preference, deported male German youngsters who sold their physical and moral health for food and for the promise that they would be sent back home from this Inferno (although some of them became ill and died of a mysterious disease).

Then there were the animals, which sold out cheaper than the young men. There were three preferential groups: the mares, the cows, and the sows. The favors of the mares and cows sold for half a pack of Russian tobacco (given to the guard for his co-operation) and two rations of dark bread and the rations of sugar of fourteen grams each (which were also given to the guard).

I could not find out the secret why the intellectuals preferred the mares. The least in demand were the sows. Perhaps because the pleasure derived from them was of a lower quality; perhaps because there were too many (the law of supply and demand operating in this matter). Generally the sows were sought by the more common clients.

What you have been reading here has been generally verified by myself personally. The facts just mentioned were, at that time — made known to an investigation commission and testified to by the author of this book in front of a special tribunal during the Vorkuta trial on September 13 and 18, 1953, and later, in December, 1953, when I was taken to Moscow. There I confirmed what I had said before, in front of five representatives of the Soviet government and in front of a group of officers and interpreters that made up a commission. In all my statements (which I am sure are still in the secret files of the K. G. B.), in order to prove the depravities of the camp leadership I described

again the whole mess of promiscuity (known to the camp leadership and even promoted by it) in the camps. The camp authorities were aware of these perverse sexual acts, including the copulation with animals.

In one of my complaints addressed to the Soviet authorities in Moscow, I wrote: *On November 7, 1952, the anniversary of the Great October Revolution was celebrated in our camp. On that day a sow nicknamed Masha was killed and served as food. Major Lieutenant Prokhurov, the operational K. G. B. chief of Camp 2, Mine 7, came into the dining hall, and, putting on a cheery smile, most likely for the affirmative answer he expected to get from the prisoners there and for the double meaning of his ensuing comments, he threw out his usual question, probably for the thousandth time: "Well, how is the meal?" And without waiting for an answer, he continued, "Excellent! Isn't it? But do not be sad. I have brought you six other 'Mashas' that are younger. Something fresh! Not one but six Mashas!"*

What do you get out of this veiled comment by Major Lieutenant Prokhurov? Why did he mention a "younger Masha" and "six other fresh Mashas"? I addressed this question to the five high officials of the Soviet government when they ordered me to prove my charges against the camp leaders.

Prokhurov's remarks meant exactly what he, as well as you gentlemen of the Soviet government, knew about what was going on in the camp. Therefore, you too are guilty, as much as the camp leaders, of the fact that in a "reeducation" camp (as you call it), such things happen. What kind of reeducation do you intend to give the rest of Europe and the world? Were not Hitler's exterminations milder and even more humanitarian if we compare his methods to yours? Was not President Truman's order to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki – deeds which you call "criminal" – justified? And if Major Lieutenant Prokhurov did not inform you what was going on in the camp, which is hard to believe, what kind of subordinates do you have? Today I ask myself, "How come I am still alive, and how come they let me go?"

As in the case of many others who knew too much and took part in numerous protests, the Soviet officialdom tried to get rid of me "unofficially" by giving secret orders to the chiefs in the camp. But my good fortune helped me to slip through. I was always informed or given protection in time by the most unexpected people. Sometimes I was protected even by some of the criminals and even by some of the officials who knew what

was going on. In several instances, when caught in brawls engineered by agents provocateurs when there were a few corpses left behind to justify the violent clash, Fate decreed that none of the corpses should be mine. I taught myself to be steadfast without being naive, and to defend myself (or others who needed defending), carrying a knife between my teeth like the pirates.

All this is past now, like a bad dream! But no matter how much I strive to forgive and forget, I cannot but remember Paul Siebert, Untersturmfuehrer in the S. S. troops, who became one of the most subservient tools of the Soviet K. G. B. I could forgive and forget those common criminal Asians who tried to murder me (by orders of the Soviets), though personally I had nothing to do with them and had probably never even met them before ; but I cannot leave undisclosed the name and rank of this German career officer who became a henchman of the Soviet secret police. In order to introduce him properly, I must go back to certain previous facts and events in the mine zones.

CAMP 11 IN IAVAS

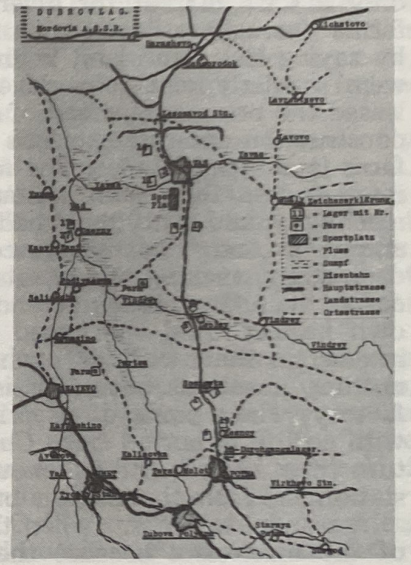
After the strike, the revolt, and the trial in Vorkuta — with which I shall deal in detail later on — all those individuals who were deemed undesirable or dangerous by the Soviets were separated and scattered throughout the other camps that were at that time in Vorkuta. The Soviet leadership thought that by separating us in this way they could control us much more easily and without too much commotion. As a result of this decision, after a series of wanderings through different prisons, in 1955 I landed in one of the camps at Potma — to be more precise, in the camp for common criminals, Camp 11, in Iavas.

Though the region surrounding our camp was marshy, the sun and greenness filled our souls with great joy. After years of ice and permanent snow and mostly darkness, we finally had the sun! For those who do not know the Arctic Circle, there are ten months of winter there, with storms and frost, and only two months of warm weather. It is hard to understand the happiness we felt here at Iavas, where it was springtime and a tree was blossoming! One single tree! The only fruit-bearing tree in the entire camp! An apple tree. A blossoming apple tree! It was a miracle! Can you who are free people understand what the blossoming of a tree means to a camp prisoner? A poor, crooked apple tree. A small gnarled apple tree with exactly ten blossoms! Ten flowers counted

over hundreds of time and caressed by thousands of looks.

Old prisoners incarcerated for years and years gathered around and, moved to tears, stood there and, for days on end, commented on the opening of each chalice until the last petals dropped off, scattered by the wind . . . Here at Iavas, in this unique camp, which was now a part of my life, my rugged hands, so often forced to wield the knife, would stealthily wipe away a tear. All this was a sign of revival. Perhaps the harbinger of a revival.

Then other joys came. The first pair of swallows, those swallows of our childhood. And there were other delicate and nostalgic reminders. The nest. Then the little nestlings, laying to sleep the beast that adversity had stirred up within us. Strange and unbelievable feelings: caged beasts (for that was what we had turned into) now catching flies and bugs and — securing them with pins on the ends of long rods — feeding the greedy mouths of the nestlings. Another kind of beast, from the K. G. B., dressed in his uniform (the sight of him sent chills up and down the spines of even those who were free) carries a child in his arms and caresses the child's blond hair. The beast is asleep in both the jailor and the jailed. But tomorrow they will confront each other and the whole cycle of resentment and rebellion will start anew. But for the time being both beasts lie hidden in the depths, overwhelmed by a humanity as, to the despair of the adult swallows, the greedy nestlings took us as their adoptive parents!



Dumbravlag — a network of death camps

Later on, a hen, a rooster, and seven golden little chickens appeared all of a sudden. Nobody knew how or where they came from. None of us grabbed his pocket knife, in spite of

the hunger we all felt. Everybody looked after them, and nowhere in the whole wide world, I am sure, could anyone find such coddled chickens as these. Bread crumbs, worms, and insects were everyone's concern all of a sudden. The beast in us lay hidden again in the depths of ourselves. It returned to wherever it came from.

The apple tree, the hen and her golden chickens, and the swallows with their nest were only an island of peace in a sea of troubles. Indeed, like any other Soviet camp, Iavas was only a slave market for diverse local enterprises and collective farms (actually a Soviet trick to steal the products of the farmer by saying that "the land belongs to the people"). The detainees were regularly sent to a slave-labor force center for those who leased the prisoners instead of oxen. Some of them were sent to a construction enterprise, others to a household or to the collective farm in that settlement. The managers of these enterprises, more interested in their own welfare and the good life than in the machinery and land they had to administer, were incompetent and evil. And, like most incompetent people, they were very demanding, making scapegoats of the leased slaves in order to cover their own incompetence and the losses caused by their own neglect. And the leased slaves, in their turn, had as much interest in their work as oxen have in pulling their yoke. Thus, nothing resulted but dissatisfaction. First, at the furniture factory, where some of us prisoners used to stuff the mattresses with cotton imported from China, sew them up, finish them, and turn them over to the warehouse to be transported to the railroad station and from there to the buyer.

A scandal broke out when the buyer refused to take possession of the mattresses because they had big spots of oil on them, spots which had not existed when we delivered them to the warehouse. Of course, the blame was laid on us — the detainees and prisoners and deportees. The authorities came to the conclusion that it was a large-scale sabotage, and the K. G. B. started to look into this matter, at first secretly. However, by reconstructing the whole process of making those mattresses, the Soviets discovered that in the cotton coming from China, some of it still loaded in railroad cars at the stations, there were countless tiny beads of pulverized oil seed which melted under heat and spread throughout the mattresses, soiling them.

We were elated by the ingenuity of the Chinese in their revenge, and we continued their stratagem with local devices at our disposal, even after the Chinese cotton was replaced

with another brand coming from a different source. Enraged, the K. G. B. ordered us out of the factory and transferred us to a collective farm to work in the fields, in spite of the fact that seventy percent of us did not have any experience with agriculture. Besides, we had no interest in Soviet corn production and in their challenge to American living standards. Did the Soviets think that we were going to wait for their crops to fill our bellies? We hoed the land, making a small hill of mud around each poor plant, and when everything was done, one of us would strike at the roots of the plants with his hoe. Just to make sure that they would grow! The next day the plants would wither and fall to the ground. The soldiers guarding us did not care. Their main concern was not to let any of us escape, or to follow after some collective farm petticoat . . .

Thus the inevitable happened: The agronomist produced only a general failure and became fed up with the prisoners' work. To our delight, he sent us to all the devils in the bourgeois-imperialistic attic. But the K. G. B. did not give us up, and kept sending us to other places, like the state farms to weed sugar beets. The result was that the state farms did not produce any sugar beet crop. Then they sent us to care for the buckwheat. The buckwheat crop vanished too!

Finally, they convinced themselves that the bourgeois proverb "A master makes his servant a thief" was applicable in our case, and that you cannot get a job done with slaves (as was written in their own Bible, *Das Kapital*, when it referred to "slave democracy" as the cause of low productivity). Hatred and lack of incentive proved to be the two main factors in nullifying fear — the element exploited by the K. G. B. — and made it powerless and inoperative. The Soviets could not or did not want to understand that the only cause of the evil was themselves. Narrow-mindedness — no matter what kind — leads to shortsightedness and obtuseness.

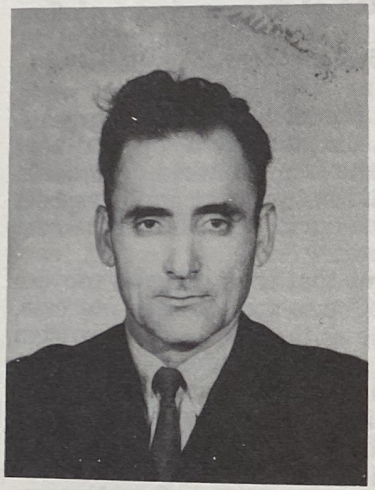
The K. G. B. investigation brought concrete results. On September 13, 1955, a camp order was read recognizing thirteen detainees for exemplary punishment for propaganda against and hostility towards Soviet order. These individuals, out of which eleven were Germans and three were Romanians (including Petre Cristea and myself) would be sent for their remaining terms in the Soviet Union to Punishment Camp 7, and their right to work would be suspended.

To protest this arbitrary order, the author of this book refused to leave the camp. On September 13, following my refusal, I

was lifted up by four Soviet soldiers and then taken forcibly to the prison across the road from the camp, from where, the next day, after a new refusal to leave, I was carried on a stretcher to the railroad station.

Upon arrival, the rest of the convoy walked to Camp 7 (where there were mostly criminals), and I was, again, carried on a stretcher. In this camp I was locked up in a cell for ten days for disobeying orders.

I should like to point out that I dared take such a stand because I sensed the weak point of the Soviets. Why did I do it? On the one hand, I wanted to make fun of them; on the other hand, I did not care if I died. Therefore I could be strong while they were weak. My coin was pure gold. Few are those who gamble on this sort of thing, tackling the Soviet master at any price.



Petre Cristea after the release from his subsequent imprisonment in the Gherla Prison in communist Romania in 1957

Interestingly enough, the Soviets' corruption, as well as their fear of the next higher in rank and power, paralyzed them. Any initiative on their part, any shadow of action on their part, any movement toward real and authentic life was stillborn. Everything was being done through the back doors and in secret, through orders from headquarters. No one knew exactly what headquarters was thinking, what interests prevailed there. And to wait in subdued expectation was better than to be out of line. This is the main reason why the Soviets are weak and formless. The whole system of "popular democratic" dictatorship is nothing else than a sinister farce and a terrible act of cowardice. Aware of this fact, I faced the situation firmly, flirting with death, counting on the hesitancy of Soviet empty formality and on their general cowardice. The fact that I am still alive is due to the high probability of what I guessed at, and

to the sad lessons of my previous extended experiences in Soviet camps.

However, let us stay a while longer in Camp 11 in Iavas. The camp's population was divided up by nations: There were approximately 800 Germans, 200 Romanians (including some Saxon Romanians), 200 Hungarians, 150 Poles, and small groups of Americans, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Spaniards, Dutchmen, Belgians, Turks, Czechs, Bulgarians, Austrians, Chinese, Japanese, Mongols, Egyptians, Iranians, Norwegians, Yugoslavs, Hindu Indians, one Argentinian, and some Russians and Ukrainians. In short, here was a mixture of most of the nations of the world.

Those who had been transferred here from the North, from Vorkuta, were considered the most rebellious of all the detainees. Therefore the commander of Camp 11, Major Lieutenant Yerevoi (who spoke Romanian fluently because he came from Bessarabia), and the chief of the operative K. G. B., Major Maiorov, took all the necessary precautions, dividing all those coming in from Vorkuta into separate groups or brigades and placing them in separate barracks.

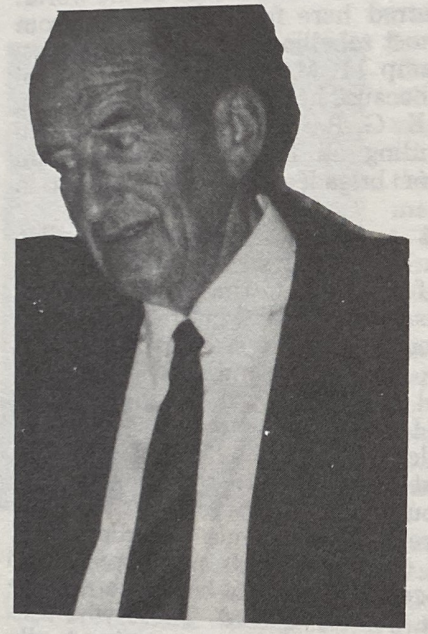
I should like to point out a fact concerning the foreign detainees in any Soviet camp. After the strike at Vorkuta in 1953, the Soviet authorities, for the first time, approved the receiving in camp of postcards through the International Red Cross, as well as parcels. By looking at the size and quality of a parcel received by a prisoner, they could guess its source. The Germans themselves could feel the difference between parcels from East and West Germany. I do not want to dwell upon the material differences in the senders, but the quantity and quality of the parcels from the West was greater. Everything these contained was good and as should be, but they began to create discord and even personal hatreds. Two friends yesterday, who would share a crust of bread, became friends no more today. The pal from the West who received fine gifts became arrogant, while the friend from the East was humiliated. Those who felt most demeaned were those who received no parcels at all; these came from the "socialist" countries now occupied by the Soviets. New groups and a new social order were formed based upon the quality and quantity of parcels received. Had some of us forgotten the days spent in Vorkuta or the foreboding under the aurora borealis?

Since the commanders of the camps took precautionary measures, our group, too, took their own measures in order to show that we were worthy of the renown we had gained through

the sacrifice and blood in the Vorkuta death camp.

First of all, we set ourselves the task of making clear to everyone that here at the Potma camps his dignity and his role should be properly displayed. We had extraordinary results, especially through our action opposing the "Stockholm Protest Against the Atomic Bomb" in April, 1955. This was a direct action against the Soviet Union and her leaders, to unmask their treachery and baseness.

Easter was drawing near. From the information gathered and from opinions expressed, Easter was to be celebrated secretly in small "parcel-oriented" groups of friends. In 1955 the Evangelical and Catholic Easter came one week before the Eastern Orthodox Easter. After a preliminary agreement between the leaders of the Romanians (Father Vasile Tepordei, Captain Leon Ostrovski, and Tanase Radulescu) and the German leaders (Willi Depner, Egon Schestauber, and Sam Liebhardt), and this author, the decision was made to have a common Orthodox-style service. A collection of money and food was taken up. Father Tepordei began to receive — through the good will and magnanimity of some monks and priests from Bessarabia — a lot of parcels, but their contents were mostly flour and honey. A special group then began to take action immediately. Discussions began with the soldiers on duty. (I should like to point out at this time that by mere coincidence most of these soldiers came from Bessarabia and Bukovina, the two former Romanian provinces taken over by the Russians in 1939, or from the sub-Carpathian Ukraine.) Since we



Willi Depner celebrating his birthday in Munich, West Germany, in 1976

— that is, most of the prisoners -- worked in a furniture factory, we had noticed a huge warehouse full of materials, especially tapestry fabrics of different qualities. I should also like to emphasize that we were at that time in the Soviet Mordvinian Republic. The Mordvinians had been compelled to speak Russian, although they have their own native language which the Russians were not able to obliterate in spite of Soviet communist attempts to do just that. The Mordvinians were actually a part of the migratory Asiatic tribes of Mongol-Huns, and could be considered a branch of the Hungarian tribes. A great part of their vocabulary very much resembles the Hungarian vocabulary and the language spoken by the natives of Komi, who in their turn have Hungarian blood in their veins.

Mordvinian women all year long wear underwear pants that stretch down to their ankles, mostly to protect their legs from mosquito bites around the marshes and lakes which take up a large part of the surrounding woods. These women are greatly inclined toward coquetry and dress up in frocks decorated with flowers and vivid colors. The cut of these frocks does not rival Parisian fashion. The dress is extremely simple: a long bag-like garment open at both ends and tied up at one end, right above the breasts, with simple embroidery coupled with a turtle neck blouse of unsophisticated design.

The tapestry fabrics I mentioned earlier were also used to make dresses but were not available in the market, though much in demand. In one of the darker nights, three rolls of such fabric were appropriated from the storage room of the factory and passed over the wooden fence to our accomplices, who included some of the Soviet soldiers. Then we exchanged the rolls of fabric for eggs (with a loss of fifty per cent of the value of the original merchandise). Our plan of action, prepared in advance, was to have Easter celebrated in the Romanian custom and tradition. The other prisoners, of all nationalities — Germans, Hungarians, Ukrainians, Poles, Americans, etc. — and of different Christian denominations — Catholics, Evangelicals, etc. — all agreed to that.

One week before Easter I was informed that the eggs had just arrived outside the camp. Now we had to smuggle them somehow into the camp. Needless to say, at the entrance to the camp each detainee was ordinarily thoroughly searched by the K. G. B. and by special troops guarding the inside of the prison. So we put our heads together, trying to find a solution, a way to get the eggs — five hundred of them — inside

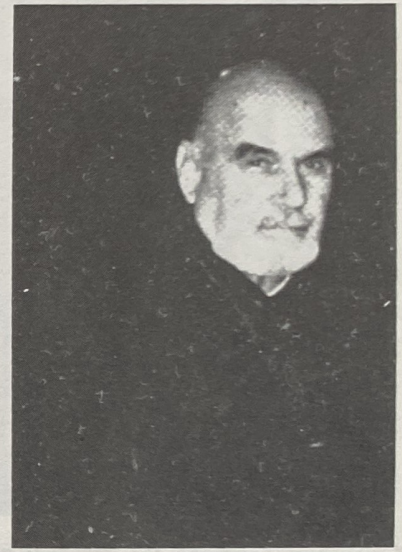
the camp, intact. Anything else could have been more easily smuggled in, but eggs are eggs, and they require special handling. Our soldier-friends could not find the way to do this, since they were part of the troops guarding only the outside of the prison. Besides, we were running short of time as Easter drew nearer . . Well, a great idea came from the Hungarians, who were always ready for any action of this kind. A Hungarian dentist (who was also a doctor), Sandor Nemeth, produced the idea and we tried to put it into practice, helped by the other Hungarians.

The next day, at dawn, we left in a group of about one hundred men who worked as volunteers on a collective farm. Thirty of us each carried a pillow-case in which the eggs, wrapped up in straw, were to be hidden. In the evening, on our way back, our group of thirty were at the front of the column. At the camp entrance we were arranged in four lines because there were four sentries to search us, under the supervision of a fifth sentry, usually a sergeant, who stood at the side on top of a small platform with steps so he would have a better view of the searching. To be doubly sure, we had arranged for a shock group of approximately fifteen men who, in case of failure, were to intervene in the following manner: Each three men were to approach a soldier, emptying their pockets full of potatoes. This was to lead to a scuffling which would have distracted any attention from the eggs, and make it possible to take them in unnoticed. The only problem was that the fifteen men were sure to get additional prison terms in case of such a scuffle. And in the case of the Hungarian dentist, Sandor Nemeth, he himself would have been held responsible.

Soon our column got closer to the camp gate, and we were counted off by the sergeant on duty. At that particular moment, the soldiers who were guarding us at work were relieved of their task and we were turned over to the custody of the camp. Our soldier-accomplices who had guarded us at work, walked a few steps away from the camp entrance, pretending they had something to do there, just for the sake of watching us entering the camp, curious to see if we would succeed. In case of our failure they, too, would have to be questioned as to how and from where we had managed to get the eggs. Had the K. G. B. found out the truth about these soldiers, they too would have been punished.

The column drew closer to the check point. The first two lines passed through easily — some of them joking, some of them cursing. The Hungarian dentist was in the third line. He

changed place on purpose since he wanted to be searched by a soldier who looked somewhat silly. When the soldier began to feel the dentist's body, he realized there was something under his shirt. The dentist, something of a sportsman in his youth (he had been something of a free wrestler), laughingly agreed to show the soldier what he had hidden under his shirt. The poor soldier, curious, stretched out his hand. In fact, since it was he who had discovered the infraction of rules, he had to produce the evidence. When everyone else waited impatiently to see what would happen, a snake's head suddenly appeared, hissing angrily at having been disturbed from its warm nest close to the dentist's bosom. Even a child knows that rabbits run fast. The panicked running of the soldiers at this moment outdistanced any ten rabbits at a time.



The Romanian Christian Orthodox priest Vasile Tepordei, arrested by the K. G. B. in Bessarabia. Iavas, November, 1955

The moment was there for us: Our group stretched out, and more than half walked inside the camp. By the time the soldiers woke up and took their places again, our merchandise was safe. Our mission was accomplished, and I can say that we did not break any eggs in the process. Of course nothing happened to the dentist, and from that day forth he carried this snake under his shirt. Because of this he was nicknamed "the man with the snake."

How did the dentist arrive at this idea of the snake? Well, beyond the edge of some of the collective farmlands were some marshes. There he would see many snakes basking in the sun on warm, sunny days. These were water snakes. He captured one of them and, for protection, pulled its fangs out. As far as I can remember, he took the snake with him when he returned to Hungary after his release.

The eggs were entrusted to Father Vasile Tepordei, one of

the Romanian Orthodox priests in the camp and one of the main supporters of the Easter celebration preparations. Among other things, Father Tepordei told me that the performing of the Easter rites required a cross and that he also needed wine for Holy Communion. As for a cross, we got in touch with Tudor Alionte, a chemical engineer, who during the war had worked for Romanian counterintelligence. (He was the person who discovered the Soviet group of partisans who blew up the Romanian Army Headquarters in Odessa in the fall of 1941.)

Lieutenant Colonel Gheorghe Pragher just before his kidnapping by the K. G. B. in Bucharest, Romania, in 1948

Alionte made a cross thirty-five by twenty by seven centimeters, out of plywood. The painting of the cross was done by our amateur painter, Lieutenant Colonel Gheorghe Pragher, kidnapped by the K. G. B. in Bucharest, Romania, in 1948. To get wine was more difficult, because even in the township stores there was no wine on sale at that particular time. But Father Tepordei told us that wine could also be made out of raisins. For Holy Communion it was required that pure wine be made from grapes. I managed to get some raisins through a German friend of mine, Fritz Meisel, now living in Bernhausen Filder in West Germany. After 1953, after the Vorkuta strike, the detainees and the prisoners who did not come from the Soviet Union were allowed to write letters and to receive parcels. What Fritz Meisel did was a sacrifice for him which we did not forget and for which I, in the name of others, thank him again.

The first stage of our preparations was now over. We had to go on to the second stage: the boiling and painting of the eggs; and then preparing the Easter cake, because the surprise had to be a real surprise. The money had been collected in the

group of Saxon Romanians by Sam Liebhardt, Willi Depner, and Egon Schestauber, and in the group of Romanians by Father Tepordei and Nicu Popescu. All these preparations were known only to our small group. Financially we were also helped by Puptzik (brother of the Polish General Vishinevski, commander of the Polish air force in England and captain in British Intelligence), who gave us the contributions from the Poles and the few Ukrainians in the camp.

The Hungarians were no less helpful. Money was given by Ferry Bacsi (his full name was Ferenc Barasics; he was a former major in the Hungarian army and came from Bacska, Yugoslavia, where he had lost all his family — wife and two children — butchered like cows by Tito's partisans only because Bacska was occupied by Hungarians; he was subsequently arrested in Budapest in 1945-1946), by Ferenc Aprili, and by Zoltan Kopacsi (all three of them representatives of the Hungarians in the Vorkuta strike). From the Germans, the collection was made by Dr. Gerhardt Roenecke, a German inventor kidnapped and deported by the Russians to the Soviet Union (after his release he went to West Germany and was appointed head of the Department of Ecology in the West German government); and by Hans Heinke from Stuttgart.

Egon Schestauber in Bucharest, Romania, soon after his release from the Soviet death camps in 1955

On behalf of the other nationalities, the collection was made by the Frenchman Raymond Souillat, from Paris, a former member of the French Red Cross working for the repatriation of French prisoners in the Soviet sector of Germany and himself arrested by the Soviets in East Germany in 1945-1946; and by Philippe Dejagher, representative of the Walloons and the Flemish

in the Vorkuta strike.

Of course, everyone could ask how come we wanted to keep our preparations a secret, while in one way or another we were appealing for money. The answer is simple: In the camp no one ever asked for whom or why one collected money. Did you want to give? Fine! You didn't want to give? Fine, again!

The cake was made by Father Valeriu Ciobanu from Romania and by two monks from Bessarabia and Bukovina. Captain Leon Ostrovski boiled the eggs, and Tudor Alionte (the chemical engineer) dyed them. The decorating of the eggs was done by this author. On each egg I wrote the first and last names of the recipient, and the words "Christ has risen -- Iavas 1955." The recipient's name was written so as to avoid arguments over the size of an egg.

Tudor Alionte, the chemical engineer from Bessarabia who worked for Romanian counterintelligence
Bucharest, 1956

At that particular time there were 220 Romanians, Saxon Romanians, and Germans from Bessarabia and Bukovina. The money raised through collections was not enough to buy all that we needed, so I took money from what I had on me and made up the difference. I had some money received on my departure from Vorkuta, received from an underground organization (made up mostly of Ukrainians and persons from the Baltic states). This money I was at liberty to use to help anyone. I had the authority to decide who the beneficiaries should be.

Father Tepordei had all he needed for the celebration: the wine for the Holy Communion, two eggs for each detainee plus one egg for each invited guest. Three days before Easter there were 260 special food rations ordered from the "pay kitchen" recently opened. Three hundred doughnuts had also been ordered, which were picked up the Saturday before Easter. I should like to point out that any order had to be paid for three days in advance.

The K. G. B. did not notice anything unusual and it did not cross their minds what was being done with the great quantity that was being ordered and bought, perhaps because it was Roman Catholic Easter, which came one week earlier. The week passed unnoticed and without incident. Father Tepordei took his time in preparing himself for all the religious services required for Passion Week within the various small groups. Those who wanted to make confession were given such permission. They were permitted even more: Holy Communion. Everything had been organized down to the smallest detail, and we were waiting for the last moments before moving into action.

EASTER

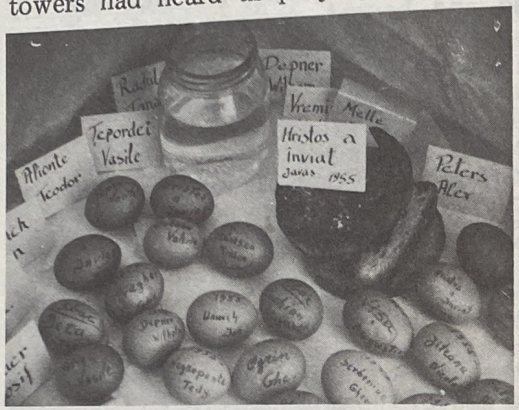
On the first day of the Easter season, at dawn, around three thirty in the morning, a few of the prisoners offered voluntarily to wake up the others, because at four o'clock the mass of the Resurrection was supposed to begin in the small room of the Chinese kitchen (as we called it) at the back of the camp. Those volunteers were Vasile Gheorghe, Petre Cristea, Dumitru Badilita, Alexe Luchian, and others.

In the small kitchen, on a narrow table, an improvised altar was set up, and on it were placed candles, a cross with the image of Christ on it, a glass for the blessed wine for the Holy Communion, a prayer book (belonging to Father Tepordei), sweet basil, and holy water. All the Romanians and Germans, as well as other nationalities, attended the service of the Resurrection, and because the room was too small, many of those attending gathered outside and listened to the mass. Upon hearing the sweet strains of *Christ Is Risen* (which once had also been sung in Russian churches), even the Russians in the camp, especially the older ones who were in the habit of taking early morning walks, joined in this impressive and unique event.

Meanwhile, Vladimir Gherutchi, the former owner of the Victoria Restaurant in Bucharest, and I were preparing to receive everyone in the dining hall of the camp. For everyone from Romania, as well as for every special guest from another country, there was, on each table, the following: a napkin made out of writing paper, and on the napkin, a slice of white bread, a slice of cake, a doughnut, a jar with sweet tea, and a red egg. The names of those attending had been written on the seats, in

alphabetical order.

By this time, the soldiers from the observation and security towers had heard us praying (an unusual event here), and had called the officer on duty. This officer, accompanied by two soldiers, was in the habit of making his rounds early in the morning to check if everything was in order. Passing by the Chinese kitchen and seeing the people gathered there, and hearing the religious singing, the officer, followed by the two soldiers, elbowed his way through the crowd of people and ordered the mass to be stopped immediately. He even asked that the cross be handed over, the cross which Father Tepordei was holding in his hand. This was to be the "incriminating object" for the report which the officer would turn in to his superiors.



Painted and decorated eggs, a slice of bread, a slice of cake, a doughnut, a jar with sweet tea, cards with the names of the recipients . . .

Painted and decorated eggs for special guests, the cross, the glass with the blessed wine, the prayer book . . .

Iavas, 1955

I felt sorry for this officer. He was not very smart. He belonged to the K. G. B. troops always guarding the outside of the camp and did not realize that this incident, if known, could cost him plenty. A smarter K. G. B. man would

have proceeded differently. But unfortunately for this officer, he fell into a trap. The cross was not handed over to him, and he was not given the chance to go anywhere near the altar. Moreover, the mass continued, only this time everyone began to sing even louder, very loudly, so that they could hear us as far away as the town of Iavas. The officer and the soldiers were squeezed tightly in the crowd, but not roughed up or hit or seized. Their caps were removed by the crowd and they had no choice but to stay and listen to the mass. It was too late when they realized their mistake.

In the meantime, the other prisoners in the camp had risen, and since the news of the event traveled fast from barracks to barracks, they gathered also, and, to our surprise, joined in to sing *Christ Is Risen*. The camp was in the middle of a district of the town of Iavas. The older people there knew that it was Easter Day, and hearing the refrain "Christ Is Risen!" at dawn, themselves gathered near the wooden fence surrounding our camp. Many of them fell to their knees, actually participating with all their souls and bodies in the holy mass, though unseen by them but heard as they stood in front of that four-meter-high wooden fence. And in the camp itself, there were elderly Russians, among the detainees, who also knelt down and wept.

Informed about what was happening in the Chinese restaurant room, groups of Hungarians, Germans, and Ukrainians were ready to intervene — as planned. But no intervention was necessary because the mass was just ending. After the mass, the people remained in a thoughtful mood, knowing that somewhere far away, at that very moment, their homefolk were remembering them.

When the mass ended, the political officer walked over to Father Tepordei and said, "Give me the cross!"

"I am not going to give it to you! You will have to take it yourself!" Father Tepordei said, happy within his soul that he had managed to end the service, which raised new hopes in the hearts of the detainees. No one suspected the impact this religious service would have on the hearts of the prisoners, or that it would so impress the detainees of our camp and set off a chain reaction into all the camps in the Potma region.

The Soviet officer grabbed the cross and walked away, followed by the two soldiers. He walked haughtily, as if he had conquered Berlin.

After this, everybody started towards the dining hall. For the majority of the prisoners, the big surprise was still to come.

As a matter of fact, it was a big surprise for the whole camp. Seeing real eggs on the tables, with flowers here and there, the prisoners were stunned. Words cannot describe their amazement and joy. Had their fate changed overnight? Why, then, were they so happy? After everyone had sat down at his place and Father Tepordei had blessed the meal with a few words and everyone had again sung *Christ Is Risen*, a complete silence fell over the entire hall. It filled up with other detainees who looked on with sympathy or perhaps envy, at this Romanian-sponsored event, as individuals merrily struck one egg against the other with the religious greetings, "Christ has risen!" and "It is true that He has risen!" One must not forget that everyone, without exception, had the first opportunity to eat an egg — a red egg on which was written his name and the words "Christ has risen — Iavas 1955."

I was looking on and my soul was very happy! As I looked at them, I understood the feelings of those who had taken an active part in the organizing of this meal. But one man did not eat his egg. On the contrary, he kept it, and, if I am not mistaken, he was the only person who took his egg back with him to Romania. He got up from the table and walked over towards us. At that moment I was standing near Father Tepordei. The man was attorney Augustin Visa, one of Iuliu Maniu's secretaries. He came closer and after shaking our hands, with tears in his eyes, said to Father Tepordei, "Thank you, Father! Now I know I shall again return home." And he kissed the Father's hand. Then he turned to me and embraced me, kissing me on both cheeks. Then he whispered in my ear: "Now I realize why everybody loves you!"

We were unable to answer because we were so choked with emotion that tears came into our eyes. Others, too, saw Visa's gesture and walked over to thank us and praise us. Everybody kept asking us how we had been able to obtain all the things necessary for this celebration. Even those who had not wanted to contribute kept asking about it. Now they were ready to help, but it was too late!

The first and second stages of these Easter celebrations in the camp at Iavas had ended. Only now, after most of the people had left, did the Soviet soldiers rush pellmell into the dining room to see what was going on, but everyone was gone.

At nine o'clock in the morning the signal for the count-off was given. The soldiers went from barracks to barracks, counting feverishly. We waited for the count-off to end, but

it was delayed. A large group of Romanians gathered at the front of the barracks and began discussing and admiring the daring of our venture. Among these was a Romanian from Bessarabia, Boris Ostapov, nicknamed "the Patriarch." He had a huge snow-white beard, although he was not so old in years. A few years after my arrival at Iavas, I had been informed about this man. He had been a Soviet agent sent back to Romania by the Soviets in 1940 with a special mission from the city of Cahul to the city of Bucharest. His bad luck was that also in the camp here there was Mihai Petcu, former agent of Romanian counterintelligence who could tell us in detail how he had followed and arrested Ostapov as a Soviet agent early in 1944, and how he had turned him over to Romanian counterintelligence with all the evidence against him.

Boris Ostapov – "the Patriarch"
Iavas, 1955

But Ostapov was saved by the events of August 23, 1944, when the Soviets invaded Romania. Ostapov eventually managed to advance in the ranks of the Romanian police while remaining a Soviet agent. He was even promoted to the rank of police commissioner of the city of Arad, and in the center of which he had lived, not far from the building of the Municipal Theater.

In 1944 he was the man who arrested the group of legionnaires under the command of Ion Ratiu, stepbrother of the head of the Romanian Legionnaire Movement — Horia Sima (also the president of the Romanian Provisional government in Vienna in 1944). Ratiu had been parachuted into the region of Arad in Romania, where he was supposed to meet certain comrades-in-arms in a conspirator's house in Arad. But the house was being watched by Ostapov, who then arrested Ratiu.

After days and days of torture, Ratiu was taken back to the

conspirator's house. His comrades-in-arms were already gone because of a previous agreement with Ratiu that in case he did not return after a period of time, they should leave. However, Ostapov found some Romanian money and foreign currency in the house. He took all the money. After a few days, Ratiu was handed over to the Soviets, who, because of his importance and his secret connection, considered that he should not be questioned by the local K. G. B. but sent by plane directly to Moscow, where he was locked up in the famous "fortress of silence," the Lubyanka Prison, which was at that time filled up with the "enemies" of the Soviets brought from all the corners of Europe and Asia.

The start of the interrogation was delayed for a while because Ratiu was in a terrible shape, beaten and tortured. Because of these beatings he remained an invalid for the rest of his life. Even the K. G. B. authorities from Lubyanka took pity on him, since they delayed questioning him. In any case, the subsequent investigation showed that Ratiu had both Romanian and foreign currency on him when he was arrested. The rage of the K. G. B. was even greater when they found out that Ratiu had been air-lifted to the Lubyanka Prison with only a part of that Romanian currency and with none of the foreign currency. Asked where the rest of the money was, Ratiu said that it must be with the "Romanian" police commissioner who had arrested him in the city of Arad, Romania.

Ratiu was sentenced to ten years in prison and subsequently sent to Inta in the Arctic Circle, his final destination Vorkuta, where he came across a small group of other Romanians to whom he told his story. The story was relayed to me later on by them. I cannot give out their names, because the Romanian (communist) Secret Service could make a lot of trouble for them even today. But Almighty God does not beat you with a stick, and the Soviets never forgive.

One day, after approximately three years, a new transport of prisoners arrived at the Inta Camp. Fate — dreadful Fate — determined that Boris Ostapov (the former Soviet agent and police commissioner of Arad, Romania) should be a part of this new load of prisoners. Here, at the Inta Camp, Ostapov began to play the part of the patriotic Romanian nationalist. The irony of it all was that he did not recognize Ratiu, or at least pretended not to. Ratiu, however, stayed away from him. For years and years they were in the same camp, and just one word from Ratiu would have dispatched Ostapov to Kingdom Come.

But Ratiu kept silent.

In 1954, when Ratiu's term had almost expired, he told N. T. and L. A. — the real names are here disguised to prevent the Romanian (communist) Secret Service from identifying them in Romania today — who Ostapov really was, and he revealed his secret, on condition that Ostapov would be left alone. From Camp 1, at Potma, Ratiu also sent word to me that we were

Political prisoners from Romania in Special Camp 11, Iavas (from left to right). Standing: journalist Jean Melle, Ion Statescu, journalist Stefan Mengoni, Boris Ostapov, Franz Schmidt, a Romanian from Bessarabia. Sitting: Dr. Augustin Visa, a priest from Transylvania, Lieutenant Colonel Ion Toba. Iavas, October, 1955

not to undertake any punishment of Ostapov in this matter. He wanted Ostapov to return to Romania after his eventual release by the Soviets. Ratiu's request was respected.

Around the corner of our barracks, a soldier showed up and started to walk toward us. Father Tepordei rushed into the barracks in order to hide a few things, thinking that a general

search would follow. (This was the usual Soviet procedure whenever tattoo had not been sounded.) The rest of us stayed in place to see what the soldier wanted. He came closer, and we, very politely, said hello to him. He nodded and uttered some kind of answer, only after he looked the entire group over. Then he spoke directly to the white-bearded Ostapov: "Are you a priest?"

Ostapov, who spoke Russian fluently, answered, "Yes and no!"

"What are you then?" the soldier asked.

"Higher than a priest," Boris said.

"What higher?" the soldier continued.

"I am a patriarch!" Boris answered, and winked at us.

"What do you mean by that?" the soldier queried, and then, without waiting for an answer, continued: "I could care less! For me, you are a priest, and I've been told to find you. Follow me to headquarters!"

Ostapov left, followed by the soldier. All eyes from the other barracks were now riveted on us, as they saw the arrival of the soldier and his departure accompanied by the bearded Ostapov.

Father Tepordei — who had overheard the conversation — now came out of our barracks, after the two had departed, and said: "Boys, things are getting hot! Boris will be locked up, and they will come and search me after the major realizes that I am the priest, not Boris!" I realized that I had to act quickly in order to get Boris out before he could start to talk and before the K. G. B. had made up its mind to remove him from the camp. I sent word immediately to our fellows, that all those who wanted to should come urgently to the exit gate of the camp, in front of headquarters, for a sit-in. Through this kind of action, we could, at least for a while, block the removal of Ostapov from our camp. (The road from headquarters to the main gate passed through the yard in which we were sitting.) Since the entire road was blocked by us — sitting down with our legs crossed — the removal of Ostapov could not have been done without walking over us.

In the meantime, we heard the signal marking the end of the countdown; and approximately five hundred persons, of different nationalities, came out and sat down in front of headquarters, without uttering a single word. The access roads to the main gate had also been blocked by other prisoners awaiting the outcome of this confrontation. This entire movement of people was completed in five to six minutes.

Suddenly, the door of headquarters flung open, and the

soldier who had taken Ostapov tried to get out. From the door to the road he had to climb down eight steps. He realized immediately that he could not get through, since the road was blocked. He said: "What are you doing here? Go back to your barracks!"

One of us answered, "Just killing time, smoking cigarettes, and chewing the fat!"

Cursing, the soldier went back in. After a few minutes, the door opened again, and Major Maiorov appeared in the doorway. Yes, it was Major Maiorov himself, the operations' chief of the K. G. B. in this camp. He looked around and realized what was going on. Then he addressed me directly and personally, calling me by name, since I was sitting in the middle of the crowd. "Urwich," he said, "tell all these people to go back to their barracks!"

The author in Camp 11, Iavas, 1955

I stood up, and, very politely, told him that I could not force the people to leave.

"What do you want?" Maiorov asked nervously.

"Now we are talking!" I said. "We would like you to let our priest go!"

"No," said Maiorov. "He broke the regulations of the camp, and I shall see what to do about it!"

"In any case," I said, "you will not take him away from this camp without walking over our bodies. And if you insist on taking him to prison, then you must take all of us to prison too! Right, boys?"

The crowd answered with a shout that echoed all over the camp: "Right!"

Major Maiorov then said: "Look, I promise you that no harm will come to him. To convince you of that, come and watch the

questioning. But tell the others to go back to their barracks!"

I answered, "If you order me to do that, I shall come, but I shall stand outside by an open door. I am not going to tell the people to leave. If they want to leave, fine! If not, let them stay!" And I made myself some room and walked up the eight steps to the open door of the major's office. The others did not leave their places. On the contrary, more persons came, out of sheer curiosity. Well, Easter is just once a year!

After sitting down in his chair, the major started again to question Ostapov, this time in my presence. In the meantime Petre Cristea walked over to me and put into my hand a piece of newspaper sent by Father Tepordei. On it was written the Decree of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R., issued December 1954, stating that officially religion in the Soviet Union was being supported by the Soviet communist state.

Armed with this piece of information, I stepped in with courage, but not before members of the crowd got closer to the building so as to hear what we were talking about. Seeing me inside, the major told me that it was better to close the door, but I bluntly told him that the door had to remain open if he wanted to talk to us. Then I produced the clipping and gave it to Ostapov to read out loud. I asked the major to listen attentively. Seeing that we were armed to the teeth with a Soviet decree, he tried to change the tune and said: "I didn't say that you were forbidden to pray, but only that you had to ask for permission first, and, believe me, I wouldn't have turned you down. Make sure that this won't happen again. You may leave now! Wait a moment! Tell the crowd to leave first, and then you may leave too!" He put on a grin. As a shrewd K. G. B. agent, he wanted to see if the people would obey me.

"No problem!" I said, and, standing in the doorframe, I thanked the crowd and asked them to clear the place. Without any protest, without saying a word, quietly they left. In a few seconds there was no one there, as if nothing had happened.

However, the crowd paused not far from the main gate, waiting to see if the major would let me go or if they would have to intervene by blocking the gate again and preventing the K. G. B. from taking me and Ostapov out of the camp.

Thoughtfully, Major Maiorov watched the people leaving. Then turning his eyes towards us, he looked at the so-called Patriarch — who was their former agent and not a priest — and said: "Make sure this won't happen again, and if you intend to repeat this, come ask for permission first. I will give you my full support, and in this way we will avoid all eventual unpleasant consequences!"

After leaving headquarters, we walked back to our barracks, where our fellows were waiting and roaring with laughter at the prank played on the K. G. B. with regard to his "Reverence," the "Patriarch" Boris.

In this unpredicted and unplanned way, the third stage of our Easter celebration ended.

For lunch, which had already been announced, all gathered in the dining hall, where the fifteen tables were neatly set up. Old and young, guest and resident, everyone had dressed up in his best clothing for this holiday, which had not been celebrated in this camp for a long time. The guests had been selected at the suggestion of some of the reliable prisoners or because of the record of their behavior in the camp. Depending upon our figures, we had invited one or two guests from every nationality or ethnic group. These guests were seated among us, among individuals with whom they could feel comfortable. Each place had a name tag with the name of the occupant, and, on the table, for each one there was a slice of white bread, a slice of cake, and a red egg. On the eggs for the prisoners, we had written their names; on the eggs for the guests, instead of the individual's name we had written the name of the country which he represented.

The surprise with the red eggs at breakfast was even greater at lunch, since no one expected to receive a second egg. Suddenly, everyone started to make calculations, to try to figure out how so many eggs could have been procured.

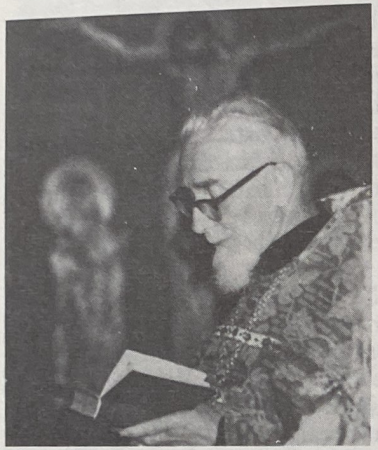
Besides the food mentioned before, everyone also received a promise of an extra meal from the pay kitchen. This meal was to be complete and consist of soup, an entree, and a dessert.

Before starting to eat, everyone stood up for the blessing by Father Tepordei, assisted by a Jesuit priest, Father Pietro Leoni, representing the Catholic Church and the Vatican. He had been released a few hours earlier from the camp prison where he had been locked up for ten days (for his remark at the Soviet-sponsored camp meeting for gathering signatures for the "Stockholm Protest Against the Atomic Bomb." His remark had been: "Who signs this protest signs his own death sentence. It is better to die a quick death than to become a slave to Communism!")

I cannot recall the names of all our foreign guests, but I shall give you some which I can still remember: Ferenc Barasics and Imre Bosniak (of Hungary); Raymond Souillat (of France);

Puptzik (of Poland); Lazar Moiseevici (of Israel); Fritz Meisel, Dr. Roenecke, and Hans Heinke (of Germany); Philippe Dejagher (of Walloonie and Flanders); Colonel Ali (of Turkey); Hassan and Ali (of Iran); Taras and Sasha (from the Ukraine and some parts of Russia).

A present, offered by a group of Germans, containing cigarettes was opened, and every smoker received a cigarette. The dining hall became overcrowded, since other curious prisoners, especially Christian believers, joined in, waiting for the moment to sing *Christ Is Risen.*



Father Pietro Leoni, invited as representative of the Vatican at the Easter celebration in Camp 11, Canada, 1976

In this way, without incident, ended the concluding stage of our Easter celebration in Camp Number 11, Iavas.

The echo of the Easter celebration initiated by the Romanian prisoners resounded far away in the villages surrounding the town of Iavas. Even the soldiers in charge of internal security in the camp told us about the questions asked by the elderly folk in town. Moreover, Major Lieutenant Yerevoi, the camp commander, told me and Father Tepordei that his mother-in-law (an old lady who had heard about our celebration), asked him to do us no harm, but to help us in whatever way he could. She made him swear to it.

"What could I have done?" the major lieutenant asked. "I like to have some quiet in my house!" So I swore that I would not harm you, but I beg you to be more careful! Don't tell anyone that I spoke to you in Romanian! Damned luck!"

Often the work brigades going out to work were met by local children who asked, "Are there any Romanians in your group?" And if the answer was yes, the children would run quickly back to the old men and women standing in the middle of the road and tell them. Then these elderly people would make the sign of the cross, thanking God and praying for all the prisoners who had, through their revival of Christian practices, brought new hope and a happiness to their own homes.

I know for sure that this holiday celebration — I should say this extraordinary event — will not be erased from the memories of the inhabitants and the soldiers of Iavas as long as they live. It was too great an event, and the mentality of the Russian is such that he must repeat the story to others as if he himself had taken part in it. The inhabitants of Iavas will always remember, with pleasure, these few unforgettable days when a group of detainees, slandered in every possible way by the Soviets, showed themselves better than all the K. G. B. agents taken together.

These detainees proved that those other prisoners in Vorkuta, Norilsk, Kingir, etc., did not die in vain. Their memory will be preserved, from mouth to mouth, for our small group proved that Soviet power is not as powerful as it is reputed to be.

Of course, there were those in the camp who afterwards said that, had they organized the affair, it would have come out better. "After the war is over, many warriors show up," as an old Romanian proverb reminds us. Unfortunately, such persons can be found anywhere.

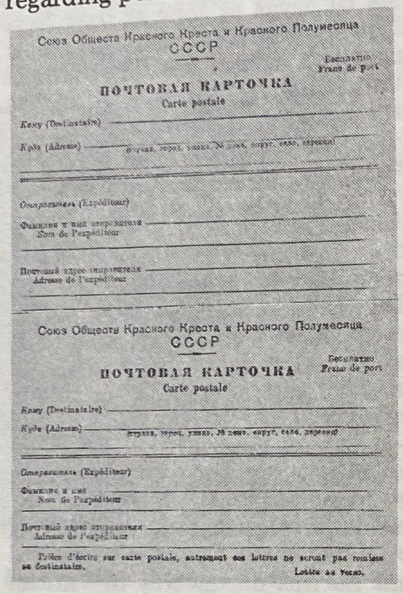
The next day the news spread all over camp that the Jesuit priest, Father Pietro Leoni, the representative of the Vatican who had just been released from the camp prison, was leaving after an urgent call from Moscow. After three weeks, we received a postcard from him telling us that he was on his way to Vatican City, to freedom.

The beginning grew out of adverse circumstances, when the Soviets started distributing the first postcards that came from the International Red Cross in September, 1953. But not everyone was given the chance to write. And not all our postcards reached their destinations, most of them being seized by the local K. G. B. and not by the central censorship, as one might be inclined to believe.

In the summer of 1954 while I was in the camp at Holodilnik, after countless protests, I was allowed to write. I had been deprived of that right by orders of the K. G. B. superiors in Vorkuta. I complained in writing through the usual channels of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. I explained my situation and, among other things, informed them that a copy of the complaint would be sent through underground channels to the same Supreme Soviet in case I did not receive an answer in six weeks.

After ten days I was summoned to camp headquarters, where they let me know that my request had been approved, and I was given two postcards. I then realized that the whole affair regarding permission to write was a local K. G. B. matter.

The first postcard I wrote was to Germany to inquire about my son Roland, whom I had never seen. The second postcard went to my godmother in Bucharest. I hoped in this way, to find the whereabouts of my family, about whom I had not had any news since the beginning of the war. I had an answer from Anna, who had married during my absence. She told me about my son. In December I also received a letter from my parents, who, to my astonishment, were back in Romania. How had they gotten there? I had no idea.


Союз Обществ Красного Креста и Красного Полумесяца
СССР
Бесплатно
Franco de port
ПОЧТОВАЯ КАРТОЧКА
Carte postale
Кому (Destinataire)
Куда (Adresse)
Отправитель (Expéditeur)
Фамилия и имя отправителя
Nom de l'expéditeur
Почтовый адрес отправителя
Adresse de l'expéditeur
Союз Обществ Красного Креста и Красного Полумесяца
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Фамилия и имя
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Почтовый адрес отправителя
Adresse de l'expéditeur
Prière d'écrire sur carte postale, autrement ces lettres ne seront pas remises au destinataire.
Letzte au verso.

Post card of the Red Cross and of the Crescent Moon issued in the Soviet Union
Document supplied by
Gerhardt Albrich

When I got my letters with news from home, the majority of the foreign prisoners regained some of their morale. Their hopes of returning home became greater, and those hopes now seemed to depend upon diplomatic relations which would require a certain amount of time to reach a solution to our situation.

THE SPANIARDS

Some of the detainees belonged to small minority groups different from each other. Generally speaking, in any Soviet prison or any Soviet camp there were people from all over the world. The Spaniards, for instance, among themselves were of

different orientations and different nuances of character that resulted in a kind of hell. People can become terrible when there is political discord or religious strife among them. There were Spaniards from the Azul (Blue) Division sent by Franco to the Eastern Front. I met some of them personally. They were a rough, proud, unapproachable, and distant people. One sample of their nobility and a perfect hidalgo, resembling the famous Don Quixote, was the air force Captain Arensio. Opposite to him was a perfect scoundrel, Lieutenant Paco, son of a general from Barcelona. There was also a poet and — in their own estimation — a pretty good poet, to whom the other Spaniards applied the rule of silence. They stopped talking to him, and he ended up insane.

Very strange this compact but diverse group of Spaniards. They were a close-knit group, acting always according to the directives of the "sphinx" Arensio, who very seldom talked. As a matter of fact, I never saw him smiling. The truth is that the Spaniards did not get along together very well (as Paco whispered to me); Paco had learned Romanian perfectly, and he was able to tell you anything he wanted, in Romanian with much fun and versatility. He used an extremely colorful Romanian, with plenty of profanity. The Spaniards always kept close together even though they differed among themselves in temperaments and ranks.

The only Spaniard who did not abide by their secret code of behavior was the poet to whom the rule of silence had been applied. Isolated within this group, the poet became insane. He was punished because he had talked with a Soviet political commissar who had called him into K. G. B. headquarters. The repetition of such a visit, two or three times, made Arensio (and probably the other Spaniards, too) draw the conclusion that the poet was giving out some secret information to the commissar. Consequently they had decided to isolate him. Even if he started to talk to them, no one in the group would ever answer. The Spaniards were the most secretive group I have ever come across. Whatever went on among them, no one ever squealed, not even Paco the scoundrel. One thing was clear: The Soviet political commissars had no power whatsoever over these impenetrable hidalgos, in spite of all their attempts. These Spaniards remained the only rock they could not break.

Other Spaniards were the former children of some Spanish communists, whom the Soviets had rescued from Franco's troops during the Spanish Civil War, and had brought over to

the Soviet Union aboard some ships, and given them shelter. There had been two or three such ships loaded with these children, who, as the newspapers of the time reported, had been saved from death by the great Soviet Union. I had met some of these "saved" children in Soviet concentration camps. They were there for different reasons. However, the usual reason was that they had swallowed Bolshevik propaganda without difficulty. And this propaganda did indeed intoxicate them, but they kept asking to be sent home. And eventually these wild young Spanish cubs could not stomach life under the Soviet sky, though they had not really ever known any other way of life. They longed for the sky of Catalonia and Granada. The "corrida" cried out in their blood!

Scattered all over the Soviet Union, they came across each other by mere accident, in the camps. For a while they also sought out the company of the fascist Spaniards, but very soon they started keeping themselves aloof. They did not get along very well even among themselves, though some of them belonged to the same generation and were of the same age as Lieutenant Paco. In spite of all this, these former children still felt this longing: They felt the cry of their native country in their hearts, a country which they had never known and with which, I am almost sure, they could not have come to terms, just as they could not come to terms with the person most like them among the children of Franco — Paco.

People are strange! These children did not know any more who they really were. They had been rescued, but they could not fit into the new society offered them. The Soviet way of life did not answer some need deep inside them, and they did not assimilate. Consequently, their Soviet saviors turned into tyrants, keeping them forcibly in the U. S. S. R. in spite of the fact that they wanted to return to Spain. Most likely they will never go back, because the Soviets are like that: They want to force you to fall in love with the wonderful Soviet system willy-nilly! That is what they want, and there are no two ways about it. They overwhelm you with affection, until they suffocate you. They hold your hand like big brothers; then they start squeezing it with such power and ardor until they crush it. This is the Soviet standard procedure. And this is what they did to these Spanish children that they had "rescued." For whose sake? Apparently they did it out of megalomania, or out of some inferiority complex. An absurd necessity to impress others. To prove something to others and to themselves. But this

"something" was tantamount to an impossibility, something bizarre indeed! It is a kind of madness which did, and continues to do much evil. Too much evil!

I know that madmen are sometimes put into strait jackets. But until that time comes for these madmen, those Spanish children, who came to age with Soviet "love," now linger in Soviet camps, while Dolores Ibarruri, the "Passionaria," sends them kisses and speeches from her residence in the Kremlin palace. Presumably she intends to preserve them for future subversive activities, or for intervention brigades, for future international terrorist operations. Is this political calculation, superior reasoning? But calculations carried to excess can kill life. The proof is in the presence of these Spanish children. Their dissatisfaction translated, in one way or another, into protests, and the protests took them to concentration camps. The Soviets are fond of humanity!

Dissidents and protestors are considered harmful to Soviet society, but helpful against bourgeois-imperialist societies where the Soviets foster them by paying them, from moneys needed here in the Soviet society that has too many who are left hungry and barefooted.

As I have said earlier, these Spanish children received the standard Soviet "love," which kept hugging them. The same treatment was afforded the Komi, the Ukrainians, the Finns, the Latvians, the Estonians, the Lithuanians, the Poles, the Kirghizes, the Kazakhs, the Armenians, the Uzbeks, the Tartars, the Azerbaijani, the Georgians, the Nenets, the Ainu, the Kalmuks, and, lately, the Czechoslovakians, the Ruthenians, the Hungarians, the Germans, the Romanians, the Mongols . . . All these are their "brothers"! Brothers by the same possessive mother. Damned love affair, this peaceful coexistence and brotherly help against colonial imperialism! Their treatment of the Spanish children is part of the "new" and "humanitarian" world, and is in no way to be compared to what the Portuguese beasts have done in Angola, the Belgian exploiters in the Congo, or the Anglo-American imperialists in parts of the world, or to what the white South African beasts have done in their country. Strange! History ignores these Spanish children, as does the United Nations!

There were other Spaniards! They had their own peculiar history. Having run away from Spain after their defeat by General Franco, whom they feared, they received political asylum in France. During the course of subsequent events, some of them

exchanged their French asylum for a Soviet asylum, because those left behind would join them soon. When defeated France surrendered to the armored German divisions, all Spaniards who did not manage to leave France were deported to Germany and imprisoned in different concentration camps. But, finally, good luck smiled on them: Germany was defeated, and Soviet "liberating" troops took these Spaniards out into the light. They embraced them with brotherly love, and the warm hand of salvation was extended to them. Then they were taken to the land of freedom, where they all earnestly wanted to go. But after a while, because of various reasons and circumstances, varying from case to case, they ended up again in camps, some of them with their children, others separated from their mates; and, finally, some with only their children's children. Entire families, and clans. In the camp, during a stormy winter, the arrival of such a group, with children of different ages and some with babies soon to be born into this new world, turned into a virtual Babel. The women and children, barely clad and unfed, walked around begging.

This extremely noisy, quarrelsome group made Captain Arensio very bitter. The austerity of General Franco's group, by contrast, was all the more evident.

Any attempts at approach between the two groups were futile. Nothing could bring them close to each other — neither their common contempt for the Soviet authorities nor the deprivations, nor the homesickness for the country about which both talked in the same beautiful words and with the same warmth. To hell with you! Who can understand you, and what is there to understand? Even Paco could not accept the debauchery and the promiscuity in this one group. Only one creature among them — a little girl named Regina, born in the camp — was the darling of all. But she preferred the Romanians, and, strangely enough, the Romanians were the only ones who could relate to both groups. When someone from one of the groups had something to communicate with someone in the other group, he always resorted to the Romanians for help. Direct contacts between the two groups of Spaniards never occurred.

As a curiosity, I should like to mention the fact that a former Romanian antiquarian managed to obtain (how I do not know) a Spanish history and geography book which also contained some literary excerpts, which he gave to these poor Spanish children, who played within the triple-twisted barbed wire fence

around which the Soviets kept powerful and well-fed German shepherd dogs constantly on watch and running on long, sliding leashes attached to a stretch of elevated wire. What impression did these things make on the tender minds of these children? And what happened to other Spaniards, who were taken away? And where were they taken?

I met one of them again in 1951, in Camp 2, Mine 7, in Vorkuta. His name was Don Carlos, and he was serving a twenty-five-year sentence for espionage on behalf of the American imperialists. The funny thing is that during the Spanish Civil War between 1938-1939 he was in the U. S. S. R. He was an hidalgo who wanted to see the rise of the Red sun but who now had to be content to warm himself with the rays of the aurora borealis. How did he get there? What made him give up the sunny sky of Sevilla or Barcelona or the magnificent shadows of the palaces of Cordoba?

At this time I was taking Spanish lessons from a former — and future — German diplomat, Christian Zinsser (more about him later), from whom I learned that a Spaniard had just arrived in camp with the last load of prisoners. I looked him up at once, and I found him. I needed him because I wanted to talk with someone in Spanish besides my Spanish teacher. He was hard to approach, but in time we became friends. He was a very quiet man, but I felt he was afraid to talk. Perhaps his past had taught him to avoid people. I asked him casually what had brought him here. He stared at me. Then, after coughing several times (he had pneumonia, as I found out later), he smiled and said:

"My dear friend, I am paying for my sins and for the Indian curses on the gold seized by my ancestors."

"How is that?" I asked, rather puzzled. I could not understand the mystery behind his words. "We are in the land of the Eskimos, here in the land of the Soviets. As far as I know, Indians live in America, and there are very few of them here, if you mean the American Indians. Perhaps you are talking about the Indians of Gandhi's India," I said. "Could you be more explicit?" I asked.

"Of course. I am telling you that this Indian curse is the cause of my twenty-five-year gift from the Soviet military tribunal. Originally I came from southern Spain. I am a military man by profession. During the war I fought for the good of Spain — that was what I felt at that time — on the side of the republicans. I come from a very old family, and because of this I had connections everywhere, and all doors were open to me.

Very often I was close to important personalities of the republican leadership, men such as Manuel Azania, president, Largo Caballero, the Prime Minister, and even Juan Negrin, Finance Minister, and others. These connections, as well as my own arrogance, self-confidence, blindness, stupidity, madness, rebelliousness, hatred and vindictiveness brought me here. What more can I tell you? It was all a bad dream, but also a reality, as I progressed from one stage to another, bearing upon my shoulders a yoke," he said.

"If you had such high connections, why did you end up here? To see the rise of the Red sun or the rising of the North Star?" I asked him jokingly.

He answered, "You don't understand. We Spaniards conquered the whole of Central and South America, and took whatever was there to be taken, especially gold. Yes, gold, together with the curses of the sacrificed Indian natives. I worked with 'Bureau Nr. 2,' where I found out, immediately after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, about the arrival in Spain of a K. G. B. Soviet general who was to serve as liaison between the Spanish communist government and the Soviet government. This general was a specialist in intelligence and counterintelligence work, and had been sent to Spain as an adviser. His name, if I am not mistaken, was Alexander Orlov. He was nicknamed 'the Swede,' and his office was on the premises of the Soviet embassy in Madrid.

"I am not too familiar with the details, but I can tell you that I was assigned the mission, by republican personalities, to go to the U. S. S. R. to serve as advocate for the rights of some Spanish refugees who had obviously been tricked by the Soviets. The subversive organization that is the K. G. B. had loaded between 7,500 and 8,000 boxes, each containing between 60 and 65 kilograms of gold ingots, with the approval of the Spanish republican government and with the complicity of the Minister, Horinei I. Prieto, who supplied the Spanish marines to load the gold on Soviet trucks belonging to a unit of tanks recently disembarked in the harbor of Cartagena. In a cave near that city, there was a depot of ammunition, where part of the old Spanish treasure had been hidden. This gold was transported from there only at night and loaded into the Soviet ships, because they feared that the civilian population might find out about this act of treason. Then, too, there was the danger that the Italians and Germans might find out about this secret cargo and capture the ships in the Mediterranean or bomb them in the harbor of Cartagena.

"The Soviet ships loaded with this gold left the harbor under the escort of Spanish warships at the end of October, 1936. There were four Soviet ships, and on each there was a Spanish representative in charge of the cargo. In the Soviet harbor of Odessa the cargo was unloaded, only by K. G. B. agents, and then transported to Moscow secretly and under heavy guard.

"Joseph Stalin must have been happy with this unexpected gift, especially since the Soviets did not give the Spaniards any receipt, or at least a handwritten aknowledgement, as procedure required.

"It seems that those Spaniards who had a hand in this deal realized early that they had made a mistake. Therefore, by a secret decision, they delegated five trustworthy individuals to go to the Soviet Union with the cargo and remain there in case the republicans should lose the war. Their mission in the Soviet Union was to diligently administer the gold and out of the profits to help all the Spanish political refugees, immigrants, and especially children who had been taken to the Soviet Union.

"The republicans did lose the war. Many Spaniards took refuge in France, where they were confined in special quarters. Some of them managed, with much difficulty, to reach that land of promises, the Soviet Union, but who there could give them a hand? The republican intellectuals there were demoralized, as were the Spanish soldiers, after they saw the truth with their own eyes.

"Their agony was prolonged by the beginning of World War II, but after that was ended, not a single Spaniard wished to remain in the U. S. S. R., to starve on Soviet collective farms. Some of the Spaniards rebelled, but they were immediately taught where to get off by the K. G. B., and were sent to camps together with their families. A small number of the children were sent back to Spain, but most were retained, reeducated, and assigned tasks.

"The Spanish gold could not ease the sufferings of our needy compatriots. We could not help our fellow Spaniards in any way. And our greetings, speeches to them, our handshakes, even when given by Dolores Ibarruri, did not keep them warm or fill up their bellies — and they continued to wait near the same old cauldron of broth for the same old spoonful of *kasha*.

"We led a gypsy life, constantly moving from one place to another like slaves. I saw my compatriots in the camp at Oranky, and in other camps, but, with regret, I must say, all I could do was to make empty promises."

"Well, how could you end up here, when you were a boss before?" I asked him.

He continued: "The war ended, but for our people there was no hope in sight. With a few exceptions for the sake of Soviet propaganda, the Spaniards were prevented from leaving the Soviet Union.

"At one of the meetings held by the leading members of the Spanish government in exile, I became so enraged that I flew off the handle and raised the question of the fate of the Spanish gold seized by the Soviets. I received no answer, but after two days I was called into the K. G. B. office, and the wreck which emerged from that meeting now stands before you, a human ghost, with a twenty-five-year sentence for espionage, etc. Beaten, my bones smashed, and suffering acutely from pneumonia, I know my days are now numbered, one way or another. Now you know more than you should know. You are young, and if you manage to escape from this hell, tell everyone that Don Carlos was honest, that he died for Spain, and that he did not betray the secret of the Five. People should know who Don Carlos was . . . "

This is how one mortal hidalgo concluded the story of his life, linked to the old Spanish gold!

After a few weeks, gravely ill, Don Carlos was taken to Sangorodok at the recommendation of Dr. Karol. From there, at the beginning of 1953, he was taken to the south, where only God and the K. G. B. know what happened to him.

THE ROMANIANS

One could find Romanians from different parts of their country in all the death camps in Vorkuta. Many of them had been given Russian names by the Soviet authorities during their questioning. Consequently, by looking at their names, no commission or international agency could infer that an individual on the lists presented by Soviet representatives, had a citizenship other than Soviet.

Who knows upon what grounds during any of these questionings the Soviet interrogator would change the Romanian name of the person being questioned? Any Romanian who did not protest signed, in fact, his own death sentence, because he would now fall exclusively under Soviet jurisdiction. I shall point out a few cases from the hundreds of thousands of such victims of this procedure, under orders from the Kremlin.

One was a Romanian born in a village north of Dragasani, in the region of Oltenia. If I am not mistaken, the name of this village was Amarasti. He was a wine merchant by profession, and he used to sell his wines in different industrial cities in Romania, mostly in the city of Brasov and in the oil-rich valley of Prahova. After being drafted into the military, he was assigned to the gendarme troops somewhere in Bessarabia.

In 1945, after the end of the war, he was demobilized and he again took up his wine-selling business. In 1946, in the city of Brasov in Romania, he came across a former comrade in arms, and they went out to celebrate with drinks until daybreak. His former comrade, though, had become an informer for the Soviets. He asked for money from the wine merchant and was turned down because the merchant did not have enough money himself at that particular time. So his former comrade informed the K. G. B. in Brasov that the merchant had been stationed in Bessarabia and had served with the Romanian gendarmes and beaten up a Soviet partisan caught by the gendarmes.

The name of the wine merchant is Ion I. Didencu. He was born with a Romanian name. But in the papers given him in the death camps by the Soviet authorities his name was listed as Ivan Ivanovich Didenkov.

In 1950, Ion I. Didencu was in Camp 2, Mine 7, in Vorkuta, and worked in a construction brigade. In 1952, one of the fingers of his left hand was frost bitten, and he was admitted to the camp "hospital." After three weeks, a nodule appeared on his left arm, and the doctors assumed he had cancer. Without any tests to get a true diagnosis, Doctor Kirilova (nicknamed Kabila) gave the order to amputate the arm, and presided personally over the operation. After the amputation, the arm was sent to the laboratory for tests, and they found out there was no cancer. The man remained crippled for the rest of his life.

At the beginning of 1953 he was shipped as an invalid to the camp in Abis, south of Vorkuta. Since then no one has heard of him.

Ion Rotaru was born in the city of Turnu-Severin, in the province of Oltenia, Romania. He served in the military in a unit of the border guards on the frontier between Moldavia and Bessarabia (seized by the Soviets in 1939). In the fall of 1940, while on border duty at the bridge across the River Prut, in the village of Ungheni (one of the new border points between Romania and the Soviet Union), he witnessed an unusual exchange of prisoners: Anna Pauker, the top Comintern agent

in Romania, for Ion Codreanu from the village of Orhei. Codreanu was a former representative in the Romanian Parliament of 1918, who had voted for the reunion then of Bessarabia with her mother country, Romania. Codreanu had been detained by the Soviets since 1939 (as he later told me). Right now he was imprisoned and serving a twenty-year sentence as traitor to his country (i. e., to the Soviet Union). His name was changed to Ivan Rotarov. Between 1950 and 1953 he worked in Mine 7 in the air ventilation service unit.

What were the reasons for the Soviet authorities' changing the names of individuals of other nationalities to Russian names and thus preventing them from returning to their native countries? According to international and humanitarian laws, man is born free, and not a slave. However, for some unknown reason, to this day the Soviet state detains people who are not and were not Soviet citizens.

Another case was that of a lieutenant in the reserves, George Gladun, originally from the village of Danila, in the province of Suceava, Romania, married to a girl by the name of Vera, a teacher of mathematics. He had two children, Nicusor and Mirciulica, and a brother, Sergiu Gladun, residing in the village of Dumbraveni in Suceava.

George Gladun (in civilian life a teacher and school principal but a lieutenant in the army) worked in the Romanian military administration in Transnistria. Before the war he was the principal of an elementary school in Bessarabia. He was arrested by the Soviets, who considered him therefore a Soviet citizen, and charged with treason. Out of fear, during the questioning, he signed, without protest, whatever the Soviets handed him to sign. In 1955, towards the end of January, when the lists of all the foreign citizens in the camp were made up, George Gladun was listed, not as a Romanian citizen, but as a Soviet.

Another case was that of the Sublieutenant Nicolae Cazacu, originally from the village of Ocnele Mari, living at Ocnitei Street number 3, a teacher and fellow-worker of George Gladun. (Later on, both were assigned to the same military unit during the war.)

When Gladun and Cazacu showed up at the administrative office of Camp 9-10, P. O. Box Vorkuta 175-5, the political officer told them, after examining their files, that they were not foreigners but Soviet citizens, and to prove it he showed them some papers previously signed by them. Only then did they realize the perfidy of the Soviet questioners. The administrative officer of Camp 9-10 in charge of the personnel

department, told them to fill out applications to the Supreme Soviet asking for an inquiry and eventual correction of the mistake. Both men wrote such a petition. In his, Gladun wrote his autobiography (which I saw personally). In his conclusion he notified the Supreme Soviet that he "was, is, and always will remain Romanian" and would never allow the Supreme Soviet to "erase his national dignity, and if he had to die in one of their camps he would die as a Romanian citizen."

The conclusion of Cazacu's petition was similar to that of Gladun. He was married and the father of three children. He had seen the youngest one for the first time in a photograph received from home on Christmas Eve, 1954. For him, this was the most beautiful present that old Santa could have brought him, together with new hopes on this great occasion.

As of August 8, 1955, George Gladun was moved from Camp 9-10 to Camp 1, P. O. Box Vorkuta 175-1. Cazacu continued to be kept in camp Sangorodok, attached to Camp 9-10. When I parted with them in February, 1955, at Vorkuta, both men beseeched me to kiss Romanian soil for them if, with the help of God, I should ever set foot again on the "holy land of Romania."

"Well, brother George and brother Nicolae, let me tell you that I have never forgotten you, and that I have fulfilled your wish sooner than I expected." On December 1, 1955, after getting off the train in the railway station of Iasi in Romania, I kissed Romanian soil right in front of the Soviet-Romanian Repatriation Commission. One of the officers there asked me what I was doing, and I said to him, "I just kissed this soil on behalf of all the Romanians dead or still alive in the Soviet death camps."

What steps did the Romanian communist government take to defend the rights of Romanian citizens back in the Soviet camps? Is communist Romania the independent and sovereign state she pretends to be?

In 1954, a Romanian farmer, Simion Girbatovschi (he lived with his family in the Craiova region of Romania) was arrested without charges by the Soviets, sentenced to ten years imprisonment, and deported to Vorkuta. On January 23, 1956, he was released after the Khrushchev amnesty granted on November 17, 1955. What right did the Soviets have in 1954 to deport people from an "independent" state like Romania? And this was done without the slightest intervention or protest by the Romanian authorities! Only after two years did the Red tsar in the Kremlin choose to show the entire world its

magnanimity and good will in setting free this Romanian farmer who, on top of all that happened to him, was supposed to thank them!

On the basis of this same amnesty, granted on November 17, 1955, which provided for total or partial freedom or reduction of sentence, punishments given to those who "collaborated with the enemy" in 1941-1945 were also taken into account. But let me ask the following question: What was the Soviet logic in doing this? Any expert in international law would be at pains to understand such a decision. On the basis of this same amnesty, in April, 1955, Dumitru Rusu — originally from Vatra Moldovitei, district of Campulung, Suceava region in Romania — was released. Now, Dumitru Rusu is a Romanian. He never was a Soviet citizen. Poor man! Who was the "enemy" with which he collaborated? According to Soviet logic, the enemy was the Romanian army defending Romanian soil against the invading Russians.

Another case was that of an Armenian from the city of Constantza in Romania, also a Romanian citizen. Because he would not or could not obtain — at the request of a K. G. B. officer — a certain piece of merchandise (he owned a shop in Constantza), he was arrested and charged as a "traitor" to his country, and subsequently deported to Vorkuta. There he worked in the camp at Holodilnik, then was released after the amnesty, and then rearrested without charges and given forced residence in Vorkuta. The name of this man is Levon Vahanovici Barsamian. He was married, but during the military operations his wife remarried in the city of Cahul. Perhaps this is the reason the Soviet authorities considered him a Soviet citizen. At any rate, Barsamian's last known address (in January, 1956) was 6-A Moskovskaya Ulitsa (Street), Apt. 15, Vorkuta.

Who was responsible for these illegal actions, and who can ever be held responsible for them? As far as I can tell, from my own experiences in Soviet camps and in communist Romania, the Communist Party and its executive branches "never make mistakes." The Communist Party is always right. However, I kept asking myself: Who will answer for these illegalities? Will anyone ever be found to pay for all the harm done from 1917 (at the time of the Great October Revolution) until today?

After a certain period of time, the Soviets found a scapegoat (i. e., Stalin), but the Communist Party, which "makes no mistakes," repeats those mistakes, only they give them other names.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL KUZNETSOV

After good days, bad days come, often the result of personal hatreds. The Russians showed their hatred of the Romanians, often mocking Romanian customs, especially after that nation's defeat in World War II. Many Russians could not stand hearing the Romanian language. This was true of Lieutenant Colonel Kuznetsov. Because he did not want to learn Romanian during his last secret mission to Romania, he accidentally came across a Romanian first sergeant with the gendarmes in Bessarabia, who arrested him while he was still far away from the front lines.

But who was this Kuznetsov, and what was he doing here in the special camp at Vorkuta? Well, Kuznetsov was the former deputy to the head of the Soviet partisans assigned to the Southern Army Corps, under the leadership of Marshal Malinovsky. He was the organizer of groups of partisans fighting in the catacombs of Odessa, and the instigator of diverse subversive activities there by these partisans.

At the beginning of 1944, Kuznetsov was assigned the mission of organizing, in the Romanian territories of Bessarabia and Bukovina, groups of such partisans, that in due time could operate behind front lines. I should like to point out that, in spite of the fact that he was a well prepared military man and a good organizer of subversive activities, he could not speak Romanian and that therefore his selection by the Soviet Southern Army commanders staff to be sent onto Romanian territory was a bad selection. All his knowledge of Romanian was limited to a few words and phrases such as "Good day," "Hello," "God help us," etc. During his entire mission, so as not to arouse suspicion, he dressed like a Romanian local peasant. Unfortunately for him, the local gendarmes knew all the folk in the neighborhood. They also were aware of the fact that the Soviets infiltrated agents into the territory of Bessarabia.

Kuznetsov's mission was all the more difficult since most of the Romanians living in these places had no interest whatsoever in switching back to Soviet rule; the difference between prewar Romania and the Soviet Union with regard to standard of living and freedom was well known.

One day, while going from one Romanian village to another, Kuznetsov stumbled across a first sergeant in the Romanian gendarmes. He managed to keep his cool and said, "Good day!"

He would have walked away unnoticed but for the Soviet military belt around his waist. On this belt the first sergeant noticed Soviet army initials. As a result Kuznetsov was ordered to stop. Not being able to speak Romanian, except for those few words mentioned before, Kuznetsov betrayed himself and became a suspect. He was then taken over by the Romanian counterintelligence, who, in turn, handed him over to the S. D. headquarters working in conjunction with the 8th German Army, at that time stationed in the Romanian city of Barlad.

At the same time, Romanian counterintelligence uncovered a conspirator, a telegraph operator whose code name was "Lena." Lena agreed to continue transmitting "information" to the Soviets but now under the direction of the S. D. To convince Lena that she should continue under the supervision of the S. D., she was assigned to an officer of the German counter-intelligence who was of Russian origin and a former secret service officer in the Tsar's army before the Soviet communist takeover of Russia.

Because of the subsequent "help" of this telegraph operator, both the command post of the 8th German Army and the inhabitants of Barlad were spared the bombing raids of the Soviet and Allied aircraft.

When the German troops finally withdrew from Romanian territory, Kuznetsov, by this time in the valley of Buzau, managed to escape the encirclement by the Romanian army and go to Austria. Here he contacted the Russian anticommunist General Vlasov, in whose information department he began to work. The end of the war put Kuznetsov in the situation of having to choose between two camps: the American and the Soviet. He was taken prisoner by the Americans, who turned him over to the Soviets in accordance with the Teheran agreement (which the Americans regretted later on). As a matter of fact, General Vlasov's entire army was handed over to the Soviets, and Kuznetsov was in that army.

Knowing what to expect from the Soviets, Kuznetsov assumed a different name and thereby saved his life. Only in 1947 did the K. G. B. discover his true identity, and he was then charged with treason and sentenced to twenty-five years. He escaped capital punishment only through the May 26, 1947, decree of the Supreme Soviet, which commuted all death sentences to twenty-five-year imprisonment.

This is how this former lieutenant colonel, appointed organizer of Soviet partisans and assigned to the command post of the

Southern Soviet Army, got to Vorkuta. At this camp on November 21, 1953, Kuznetsov accidentally came across three of his former collaborators, Jews from Bessarabia, to whom he had given forged papers with which they had managed to escape from the Moghilov internment camp for Jews (under the Romanian General Antonescu's government). These Jews were now serving twenty-five-year sentences after being charged with treason to the Soviet Union.

One of these Jews pretended to be a poet and wrote Soviet patriotic poems which he sent directly to the Supreme Soviet, pretending devotion to the Soviet motherland. One day, Kuznetsov got angry and yelled out in a loud voice, "These Jews are ready to sell their grandmothers to save their lives!"

These three former Soviet partisans of Jewish origin told me that many Jews had been set free from the Moghilov internment camp due to the close friendship between the head of the Zionist movement in Romania, Filderman, and General Antonescu — former high-school pals and good friends.

The same Jews told me that — through Filderman — many Jews who were being sought by the German S. D. were saved due to the same friendship mentioned before and were given safe passage from Transnistria through the Romanian seaport of Constantza.

A story told by Kuznetsov was not taken seriously by me because I was familiar with a different version coming from a more reliable source. It was the story of the Spanish gold told to me by the Spaniard Don Carlos in Death Camp 2, many months back. Don Carlos was not in Vorkuta when I met Kuznetsov there.

In any case, Kuznetsov claimed that in November, 1936, a young underlieutenant, from the K. G. B. in Kiev, was detached — on a special mission — to Odessa to unload a cargo of gold arrived on board some ships from Spain: approximately 8,000 cases 50 by 30 by 20 inches each and weighing between 60 and 70 kilograms apiece. It was the gold which the Spanish republicans had "saved" through the custody of the Soviets. "The Spaniards put the lamb right into the wolf's mouth," said Kuznetsov. After being unloaded from the ships and reloaded into some railway cars, the gold was taken to Moscow under guard and in great secrecy.

How true Kuznetsov's supposed participation in this action was I do not know, but, in any case, a connection, a loose link, a little bit of truth could be sensed in his story. How come he

knew so many details? He did not know the tragedy of the Spanish gold up to the arrival of the laden ships in Odessa, nor did he know Don Carlos. How could he have found out the first part of the story? Where could Kuznetsov be right now?

MORE ASSASSINATIONS

Miroslav Kviatovski, an electrical engineer of Ukrainian descent, was born in the Romanian province of Bukovina. A member of an old Ukrainian nationalist organization, he was arrested by the K. G. B., sentenced to 25 years, and subsequently taken to a Soviet death camp. Since he was born in southern Bukovina, he was considered a Romanian citizen. After Khrushchev's amnesty, he was allowed to return to Romania. In 1956, while he was in Romania, the K. G. B. asked him to work for the Soviets, but Kviatovski categorically refused. A Soviet agent, operating in Romania under the pseudonym "Yakovlev," killed Kviatovski by poisoning him.

Canuta Georgescu, born in 1926 on Bisericii Street in Moreni, in the Prahova region of Romania (son of Traian Georgescu, tools and equipment distributor with the Columbia firm in the same locality), had the same fate and was killed in the same manner. Since Canuta Georgescu was the private secretary of Guta Tatarascu, immediately after August 23, 1944, the Soviets made him an offer to study "diplomacy" in Leningrad. He categorically turned them down, stating that he "did not want to go to study in the Soviet Union only to return as ashes in an urn (as happened to several Romanian students)." By making the above statement and by showing that he despised the Soviet proposal, he drew the hate and anger of the Soviet embassy in Bucharest and of the Soviet Secret Service operating in Romania.

After taking part in a banquet with several Soviet officers, he suddenly felt sick and was led home by the "physician" of the Soviet embassy in Bucharest, who treated him on the spot without allowing him to consult any Romanian physician. A few days after the Soviet physician's "treatment," Georgescu died. His death was confirmed by a Romanian physician only two days later — with permission from the Soviet physician. The cause of death as diagnosed by the Soviets was "heart attack," which was immediately rejected by the Romanian physician as unlikely due to the greenish-yellow color of the

corpse — a sign indicating poisoning. The certificate of death was filled out and signed by the Romanian physician in the presence of the physician of the Soviet embassy. Canuta Georgescu is buried in the cemetery of Moreni.

THE OLD MOTHER

Willy Knurbin was a German national from the region of Koenigsberg, East Prussia. His is a special case out of thousands of cases among the detainees in the Soviet death camps.

Like any ordinary German, he was recruited by the German army and assigned to a special corps in the S. D. Since he knew Russian, he was specially trained to be parachuted behind Soviet lines and also had the mission of "safety pin" or "mole."

After being parachuted, towards the end of 1943, Knurbin gave himself up to the Soviet authorities and accepted their proposal to work for them. After lengthy instruction and special preparation, he was parachuted during the last stage of the war, in 1945, in the province of Mecklenburg, Germany. Once the war ended and the Soviet administration was installed in East Germany, Knurbin was given the position of chief police inspector in a town in Mecklenburg province. From here he reestablished connections with his former superiors in the S. D. — who by now were collaborating with the Allied forces — and began to work for them. He was deconspired by the Soviets, arrested and sentenced to 25 years. After a long trip — his reward for a favor done for the Americans — he arrived at the Vorkuta death camps. In 1954, we found him in Camp 9-10, and in the summer of 1955, in Camp 11, in Iavas. Through the correspondence which he maintained with his family living in Berlin, on Lichtenfeld Strasse, by sheer accident — and to his simultaneous joy and disappointment — he discovered that his mother (at that time over 70 years old) was also a deportee, somewhere in Siberia.

After years of desperate attempts, Knurbin finally succeeded in locating his old mother, whom he had not seen since he enlisted in the army.

From his camp in Iavas — a locality in the Mordvinian Soviet Republic — Willy began a correspondence with his mother. To his and our great surprise — that is to the surprise of all the detainees in Camp 11, in Iavas — we learned that the great

majority of the German native population of the region of Koenigsberg in East Prussia had been deported by the Soviets to distant Siberia. The Soviets, the humanitarian accusers at the Nuremberg trials, kept doing things for which they had condemned the Nazis. To replace the German natives -- already deported — the Soviets brought in Soviet citizens to colonize that region. The Russianization and Sovietization of the Western territories was the first stage after the forced assimilation of the Baltic states.

His old mother wrote to him that, in order to earn her daily bread, she was forced by the Soviet authorities to pick up firewood. The reward of this "collective" work was not enough to make a living but quite enough not to let her die!

One day, Willy Knurbin was called to the camp headquarters and was given 15 rubles which had been sent to him by mail by his mother. Like any mother, she sent her life savings to her only son, detained and serving a 25-year sentence. But Knurbin received (almost every month) one or two parcels of food — valued at hundreds of rubles by the Soviets — from Catholic and Protestant charities in West Germany. With help from some of his closest friends, he collected some money which was immediately sent — together with those 15 rubles -- to his dear, old mother.

For the Soviet authorities, no matter what Willy's crime was, his mother — who had not seen him since the beginning of the war and was not responsible for his deeds — had to pay for it with deportation because she was his mother and especially because she was a German mother. Prussia, the motherland of the German military caste, had become a Soviet socialist province! Prussia — the Gordian knot of the erstwhile national socialists! Perhaps a launching pad for Soviet "civilization" towards the West.

HAIL TO THE NORWEGIAN NATION !

Here, in Camp 11, in Iavas, for the first time, I met a descendant of the Vikings, a Norwegian. How he had gotten into the Soviet death camps, I could not find out. No doubt through someone's "good will" and as an "American spy." He was serving a sentence of "only" 15 years.

I should like to say just a few words about this likable Norwegian, to express my admiration for King Olaf V of

Norway, for the Norwegian government and for the Norwegian ambassador in Moscow, all of whom morally helped their compatriot fallen into the spider web of the K. G. B.

As far as I know, it was the only case when foreign relatives kept in direct touch with a prisoner through their government and its ambassador in Moscow. Neither the Americans, the English nor the French were able to walk in the footsteps of the Norwegian government. Materially he was helped only during the last two years of his detention. However, before that, he regularly received letters from his sister in Norway, letters which were indeed a balm for all of us who wanted to survive in the Soviet death camps. These letters were feverishly read, always making a deep impression and creating hope in everyone's heart — the hope that somewhere far away someone was thinking about us.

I hope that after his repatriation to Norway, this Norwegian did not forget to tell the truth to those who did not believe it, the truth about the ugly face of the Soviet empire ruled by the state superstructure of the K. G. B.

IANCU JIANU'S DESCENDANTS

In the fall of 1948, the Soviet troops stationed in Romania held military maneuvers in the mountainous region of Oltenia, somewhere around Gorj, in which a detachment of Soviet paratroopers took part. (This happened when the Romanian Soviet communists started to set up the first People's Councils, and the presidents of these councils were brought over from different industrial regions of Romania, picked from the so-called working-class "cadres" who were, in fact, communist agitators, organizers of the party groups, and terrorists.)

One morning, at dawn, the Romanian peasants of that region saw airplanes marked with star insignia dropping paratroopers out of the misty sky canopy. One of the peasants — who had lived in the capital city of Bucharest during the war and survived Anglo-American bombardments — thought he had recognized the airplanes as American and gave the signal that the Americans were landing in Romania. He was convinced of this.

The reaction of the entire village was spontaneous since the Romanian population was expecting arms and ammunition from the Americans to fight the invading Soviets. Everyone in that village, from young to old, went to the communist

People's Council, grabbed its president, the party secretary and all those who had come to set up the forced land collectivization process, and hanged them from the trees in the village plaza. Having done this, the entire village went to greet the "Americans" for whose help they had been waiting since the Soviet troops occupied Romania. The village elders were dressed in Romanian national costumes and were waiting at the village entrance for the great event, with bread and salt in hand (an old Romanian greeting custom).

When the Soviet paratroopers got closer and the villagers realized their error, panic broke out among them, to the astonishment of the Soviet soldiers, who could not make out the cause of this strange behavior.

In a few minutes all the villagers were gone while the Soviets were trying to find someone to explain the situation. Before long, everything became clear to the Reds, perhaps sooner than they had expected. The hanged communist officials were still warm, and on their chests the Soviets could see signs with the words "Death to the communists!" They needed no further explanation since the facts spoke for themselves.

The military maneuvers were quickly interrupted, and the Soviet troops began chasing the fugitives through the nearby forests. The event is kept in the strictest secrecy for fear of public reaction — internal and international. The police began a furious search for all those who had taken part in that action.

In the summer of 1949, the Soviet questioning body in Constantza, Romania, in the "Turkish Prison," sentenced nine Romanian peasants to 25 years in prison for the "crime" committed against those who had tried to "collectivize" them by force. All nine were locked up in scrap-iron railway transportation cars and shipped to the Soviet Union (as had been done in other similar cases). Two of these peasants died during questioning in Constantza; four died in the Siberian death camps; and only three returned to Romania with the December 1, 1955 shipment which entered Romania at the city of Iasi.

After they were handed over by the Soviet representatives — right from the railway cars — to the Romanian communist authorities, they were locked up again by these authorities in the Gherla Prison.

Following that unusual event, the descendants of the famous Romanian outlaw Iancu Jianu used to say: "Had the Americans fetched weapons for us even in wheelbarrows, they would have arrived a long time ago!"

YOU CHEKA AGENTS!

"The time will come when you Cheka agents shall eat one another!" was one of the slogans that spontaneously appeared in Lvov. At first no one understood what purpose this kind of slogan served. In their turn, the agents did not even bother to notice them! What was the meaning of these slogans?

It is well known that the newspapers of that time kept informing us about the heroic struggle of the Ukrainian partisans for the liberation of the Ukraine. The Ukrainians — who have been more than 300 years under Moscow's domination — fight from father to son to regain their national independence.

With the beginning of the 1941 German campaign against the U. S. S. R., the Ukrainians cherished great hopes that the German Reich would grant them national independence and thereby the possibility of forming the independent state of the Ukraine. Of course, in the Ukraine there were several nationalist political groups, but, after all, the ultimate objective of all these groups was one: a free Ukraine. However, the foreign policy of the German Reich towards the Ukraine led to serious disagreements and to an avalanche of decrees by Hitler. These mistakes made the hopes cherished by the Ukrainian people and its leaders crumble like a castle of sand.

At that time Lvov was the center of the Ukrainian nationalists. Consequently, here, the first Ukrainian resistance against the German occupation troops began. This matter should not be misunderstood since it is often described in Soviet literature as conceived and initiated by the Soviets and in their spirit. The truth is that the rise of the Ukrainian Resistance Movement was and remains a purely Ukrainian action in all its development and consequences.

The groups of partisans in the entire Ukraine rose spontaneously against the occupation troops of all nationalities which were fighting alongside the Germans. It is true that Moscow, in her turn, organized several groups of partisans (which we have already mentioned) at certain strategic military points which the Kremlin had found necessary for the organizing and carrying out of certain interventions behind enemy lines. Both the Ukrainian nationalist partisan groups and those directed by Moscow worked together only in certain huge military operations.

When the tide of the war turned decisively against the Germans, the partisans directed by Moscow joined the Soviet military units, whereas the Ukrainian nationalist partisans remained completely independent, starting to fight anew against the Soviet invaders directed by the Kremlin.

The nationalist partisans were very well armed since there were plenty of war materials around, on every road. All the partisans had to do was to pick them up. If the German troops and their allies had great losses inflicted on them by the Ukrainian nationalist partisans, then the world should know that the Soviet troops had twice or three times as many losses inflicted on them by the same partisans. Moscow was extremely concerned by this situation, especially since in the Western press in particular and in the Allied press in general, news about the heroic fight of the Ukrainian people popped out sometimes. The paradox about the news spread by T. A. S. S. was that they did not confirm the fact that the partisans who fought so daringly against the German occupation troops were now fighting against the Soviet occupation troops.

Stalin could not allow any compromise even for the sake of keeping up appearances. Therefore, he gave the order to the supreme command of the K. G. B. — led by Beria and Abakhumov — to prepare a plan of action to be carried out immediately to "pacify" these "bandits" (as the K. G. B. used to call Ukrainian partisans formerly lauded by them while they fought against the Germans). Stalin's order said that all those caught with guns in their hands who had fought against the Soviet troops were to be shot on the spot when caught, without any sentencing.

This order and its enforcement by the K. G. B. had an effect contrary to that expected by Moscow. The entire Ukrainian nation rose to defend their country.

When the war was over, the K. G. B. command gathered all its forces on the Ukrainian territory and began systematically to comb the entire Ukraine. While so far only those who had been caught in the act were held responsible, from that time on, the "death squads" — as the K. G. B. troops used to be called — went to the next stage of Stalin's plan, directed by Beria: Any relative — regardless of the degree of kinship — was held responsible for actions done by any member of the family.

During my stay at Vorkuta, I had an opportunity to talk to many of the leaders of the Ukrainian nationalists, to take part in political debates, and to work with them in the majority

of the actions taken by us — in different ways — against the camp administration and the slavery of the Soviet death camps.

I should mention here that there were separate Ukrainian factions which espoused different political concepts and courses of action. Some of them wanted to out-Herod Herod but were not able to do it although they sought — even by resorting to violence — to impose their will in front of the great multitude of Ukrainians in the Soviet camps in Vorkuta and — later on — in Potma. (The Ukrainians made up over 60 percent of the death-camp population.)

As I said before, the end of World War II in Berlin brought the Soviet Union not only victory but also the beginning of another war against the Ukraine, considered by many to be an internal war on a great scale. According to some statistics gathered and presented at secret meetings with Ukrainians, I was inclined to believe that the Soviet troops lost more men between 1945 and 1950 — during their battles against the Ukrainian National Front — than during World War II, from the moment the first Soviet soldier crossed over into East Prussia and went to Berlin.

The new terrorist methods imposed by the K. G. B. all over the Ukraine and later all over the Baltic states, methods which meant holding the entire family responsible for the deeds of any of its members, the beating and lynching or the deportation of families, caused the formation of rebellious separatist groups of people who acted individually. These groups had been excluded from the nationalist movements by their respective commands because they used a peculiar way of fighting the K. G. B. people and even their families. These groups advocated a radical style of struggle, based upon the old saying: A tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye!

These small separatist groups were made up of approximately 15 to 20 men and women. All these "outlaws" were the only survivors of their families, who had been murdered, lynched, imprisoned or deported by the K. G. B. This was the reason which drove them to unite in will and fate, to fight to their last breath. They wanted to avenge their families destroyed by the K. G. B.

It is interesting to notice that a great majority of these people acted on their own only because they had happened to fall into some strategic regions which were classified as dangerous by the K. G. B. and where the same K. G. B. used to strike brutally and mercilessly.

These people were neither bandits nor criminals — as the K. G. B. used to call them — and if they killed K. G. B. agents, it was because they themselves had suffered too much and were no longer disposed to pay for the so-called mistakes of others. I repeat: These small groups were separatist and not accepted by the supreme command of the Ukrainian Nationalist Movement due to their unorthodox ways of fighting. However, the Soviets always loudly claimed that all these groups acted under direct orders from the supreme command of the Ukrainian Nationalist Movement.

One of the slogans which later appeared in Lvov — and whose meaning the majority of people could not guess — was: "You Cheka people, your time has come! Bon appetit!"

In 1951, in the camp of Mine 7 in Vorkuta, I befriended a Ukrainian from the region of Lvov who worked at the set of boilers which heated the water for the central baths of the camp. In the same place worked another friend of mine, a former air force colonel by the name of Boris Vasilevich (nicknamed Barada) — one of the leaders of the 1948 prisoners' uprising in Death Camp 408, southeast of Vorkuta.

The Ukrainian I befriended was called Pavel. At that time he was a little over 50 years old and used to take great pleasure in telling true stories about the life and deeds of the Ukrainians, about their liberation struggle against the Germans and the Soviets.

In the spring of 1951, there, in that particular boiler room, the Soviets discovered two cases of home-made hand grenades, which led to the arrest of two people — a Russian and a Ukrainian — who afterwards were taken away by the Soviets, and we couldn't find out anything about them. One thing was clear: These two admirable men did not divulge anything and assumed full responsibility, a fact which might have caused their death. But their eventual sacrifice was not in vain. Through their determination they proved that death has her own beauty and that sometimes it is worth dying for a righteous cause. All the attempts of the K. G. B. in the camp to find the links of the chain of action failed. Indeed, none of those who were connected in different ways to this chain "disappeared."

One day, Uncle Verdes — the old man from Bessarabia — who also worked at the central bath room distributing the bed sheets — and who saw me talking to Pavel several times, said to me smiling, "You found good company, lad! You should know that Pavel is a very interesting man, a man whom all

Cheka people fear and respect."

I said, "Why do you say that about Pavel? He is a pleasant man and he knows many things about the life of the Ukrainians. Besides, he is much more impartial than the young people."

He asked, "Do you know why he is here, in the camp?"

I said, "Yes. As far as I know, he was a partisan or freedom fighter. However, he never told me in detail how he got caught."

Uncle Verdes said, "He is a butcher by profession, but he can also handle cooking. The thing is that his dishes have too much pepper in them, as Lenin used to say about Stalin when asked who would be his successor to take charge of Lenin's kitchen. Ask Pavel how he was caught by the Soviets, but never mention that I gave you the idea or you'll lose my friendship, lad!"

After a few days, I had the opportunity to talk to Pavel, and I asked him to tell me in detail why he had been brought to Vorkuta. I had to promise to listen to him attentively and not to condemn him too hastily — as a great many Ukrainians unjustly did. Then, for the first time, I realized that Pavel had a selected entourage from among the Ukrainians.

He told me the following: "I fought as a partisan against the Germans and against the Soviets, who replaced the Germans. In my youth I worked as a butcher and — like any man — I hoped to have a quiet life when old, with my family. Of course, grandchildren were supposed to be included. But not everything turns out as planned.

"A son of mine was caught in an action against the K. G. B. and was lynched by their agents in spite of the fact that he was only 15 years old. The hysteria of war, the hot blood, makes people — especially young people — lose their minds.

"The K. G. B. did not stop at lynching my son, and, to put it briefly, they also killed my parents. Then they murdered my wife, my mother-in-law and three other children of mine as well as the families of two brothers of mine whose children had acted together with my 15-year-old son. In other words, a Ukrainian tragedy — such as only we Ukrainians experience and feel. What do you know about the Ukrainians' struggle for freedom?

"During this time I was on a mission assigned to me by the high commander of the partisans, Bandera. I belonged to them when I found out what had happened to my family.

"You can imagine the hate which took deep root in my soul. I understood that my son — or even I — had to pay for his

deeds. But what guilt had my old parents, my wife and my little children? Why did they have to kill them?

"I had to take my revenge on the Soviets, and that had to be done in such a way as to extinguish my fire and drown my hate in their blood.

"There were several people in situations similar to mine. We all were ready to take our revenge on the bloodthirsty K. G. B., for our families and our nation. We formed a group of approximately 20 individuals, left alone in the world, without any relative. Our only family were the partisans, and the objective was — and still is — a free Ukraine.

"After our final decision regarding future actions, we let our leaders, including Bandera, know about our thoughts and initiative which infringed upon the known regulations of military warfare. We were sure that our proposals would be accepted; perhaps, more than that, we would be congratulated for our stubbornness.

"But many go out for wool and come home shorn. The high commander, Bandera, forbade us categorically any independent action not coordinated by him. Not only our action in itself but also the manner in which we proposed to carry it out was forbidden.

"We had made up our minds to destroy anything connected to the K. G. B. and its collaborators, including all their families.

"Here is how the order given to us in answer to our proposal was worded: *We partisans, fighters in the Ukrainian Liberation Army, are for the destruction of the Soviet invaders, especially the K. G. B. apparatus and its collaborators, by any means whatsoever. However, we do not allow these means to be used against innocent people or the families of the K. G. B. agents. The Soviet press brand us bandits, claiming that we kill innocent women and children. Therefore, we must prove the naked truth. You are hereby forbidden to act on your own. If you do not obey our orders, you will be excluded – regardless of services done to the Ukrainian nation – from the ranks of the partisans fighting for the liberation of the Ukraine.*

"But our hate was boundless, and our thirst for revenge made our heads so hot that we asked to be relieved from our positions and removed from the records of the partisans' high command.

"We couldn't care less about tomorrow, and death was from that time on our beautiful bride. We knew that our fate was forever sealed: harassed by some from the front, rejected by others from behind.

"We took residence in the outskirts of Lvov, and it was from here that we launched — towards the end of 1947 — the slogan which from the start gave a lot of headaches and many doubts to the K. G. B. people. In our group of approximately 20 people, there were three women. They, too, had lost their families, just as we had.

"We began by keeping a close watch on the offices and houses of the K. G. B. agents. Then we went into action.

"During the three years of action, we suppressed only notorious K. G. B. agents, rehired K. G. B. agents, and their families. We never suppressed a soldier who was serving in the army. Each and every action assigned was carried out by us in small groups.

"My elder brother, who was the commander of our group, fell during one of these actions, and I, being the oldest of those remaining, was proposed to take charge. I was glad to take command, but I set one condition: From that time on, any K. G. B. person caught by us was to be brought to me, dead or alive.

"I, the peaceful man of yesterday, head of the family, lover of life and butcher by profession, became the avenger of the day. The animal instincts — required to carry out the mission of butcher — broke loose in me.

"Don't look at me so frightened, lad! All I did was to fulfill a sacred oath which I had made in front of the altar of a church in Lvov. I killed those brought alive to me, but I always showed them beforehand what would become of them: smoked sausages which their own kind — the K. G. B. people — would eat!

"In this way, the first part of our mission was carried out, and we wished the K. G. B. consumers 'Bon appetit!' The sausages — made from the meat of their own people and seasoned with all possible spices and smoked, too — were highly appreciated in the K. G. B. houses and our men sold this special merchandise only to the K. G. B. agents and their collaborators.

"Our action gave a lot of headaches to the K. G. B., and we were discovered by pure chance. However, not all of us fell alive into their hands. Only three of us were caught severely wounded since we fought to the end to let them know whom they were dealing with.

"We were sentenced to 25 years (the death penalty having been abolished at that time). The sentence did not scare us. My great grief is that, of the three of us who lived, two died here in Vorkuta in a mine catastrophe. I am the only survivor,

an ardent Ukrainian nationalist, unfortunately rejected by most of my countrymen for my crimes, which I can not find more degrading than the crimes perpetrated by the K. G. B. against my beloved people."

Pavel's story is a shocking one, from the Ukrainians' struggle for freedom. I think that, before we condemn him for his deeds, each of us should think what he or she would have done or how he or she would have acted under the same circumstances and in the same period. Only then can we judge him.

Now I understood Uncle Verdes' hint concerning Pavel the cook and Pavel the butcher. Time reestablished the closeness among Pavel and the other Ukrainians through the cruel fate of circumstances and the daily fight for survival in the Soviet death camps with special regimen in Vorkuta.

THE INSPECTOR FROM THE BRITISH INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

The olive branch was being shown all over Europe by the Allies, who had defeated Hitlerite Germany right in Berlin. At the same time as the display of the olive branch — the traditional sign of peace — the world was hoping for a new life, something to bring happiness after the sufferings caused by World War II. New sparks were rekindled all over the world, and everyone hoped and hoped.

After the end of the war, in Bucharest, a new internal power struggle began among the political parties. One must keep in mind that at that particular time Romania was under Soviet occupation and that any political move was known to the Soviet command.

There were many changes in all the structures which sustained the political and intellectual life of Romania and especially among the military. At the beginning of 1946, many active-duty military officers had to look for a new career in civil life. For these people, the army had been their career, and their entire life was dedicated to it. As civilians, they did not have any profession and had to start from the very beginning. The majority of these officers were rather advanced in age and had more difficulty in adapting themselves to civilian life. Many began to do clerical work; some started their own businesses, and some did whatever they could do best.

After the end of the war, commerce began to flourish. On Lipscani Street in Bucharest, there sprang up — like mushrooms after the rain — small shops where one could buy whatever one's heart desired: from thread and buttons to expensive silks. All you needed was . . . money.

At that particular time, ninety per cent of these small shops were owned by Jews who began to come here from all over the world, aware of the good profits to be made.

Only ten per cent of the merchants on Lipscani Street were Christians — most of the Christians had been killed in the war -- and they were faced with tough Jewish competition especially because of the lack of wholesale merchandise. (The wholesale merchants were, for the most part, Jewish, too.)

The truth is that the Romanian Jews had not gone to the Nazi concentration camps. Hitler asked General Antonescu to hand over all Romanian Jews to the Gestapo, but Antonescu refused. He protected the Romanian Jews by giving them menial jobs and claiming that they were doing hard labor. Hitler gave up and ceased to press Antonescu.

Immediately after the end of the war, all Romanian Jews were held in high regard and backed up both by the Romanian authorities and the Soviet occupation troops because behind them there were some big financial interests and some very powerful newspapers whose support both the Romanian authorities and the Soviets needed.

In the daily life of most Romanians, seeds of bitterness and hate were planted at the same time because both the Romanian communists and their Soviet masters encouraged most Jews to put on airs as the new masters of Romania (an old Soviet trick to stir hatred among nationalities and religions).

The Jews began to be treated by the Soviets and their Romanian communist servants as victims of Romanian Naziism and militarism. (One must not forget that the Soviets started out as allies of the Nazis and that, before the Soviet-Nazi split, the Romanian Communist Party heartily applauded the Soviet-Nazi partition of Romania.)

In any case, the majority of the Romanian Jews were well known in their own country. They did not suffer any hardships though some of them pretended they did. While General Antonescu gave them menial work — such as sweeping the streets of Bucharest — to appease Hitler's wrath, the Romanians were dying fighting the Soviet invaders. The Jews were sweeping the streets so that Antonescu could trick his powerful ally, Hitler, that they were doing hard labor whereas Romanians

died on the front for the sake of the country. It made a big difference!

Gheorghe Nicolaescu, former cavalry captain, was demobilized and thrown into the streets without any material support, with high chances of starving to death. The help received from a lady friend — whom he had known for years, and who had some money put aside — saved him. She knew how to show her gratitude at a crucial moment in the life of her friend of yesterday and of today. She called him "Gigi" (and so shall we from here on). Gigi was her great love and her great hope. They could not marry because of certain laws stipulating that the future wife of an active-duty officer had to have a certain dowry in order to be a socialite. Things were changed now, and those laws which caused much suffering to lovers were abolished once the war ended.

Gigi opened a small men's clothing shop on Lipscani Street in Bucharest. His was the only Christian business surrounded by several Jewish shops with which he was trying to compete and survive.

Since the anti-Semitic prewar propaganda (which intensified following the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression treaty of 1939) was still holding sway in the hearts of many Christians, quite a few of these considered it their moral obligation to buy from a Christian shop even if the price was higher than in a Jewish shop. Through his personal attitude, and due to his educational background, Gigi always helped his clients with a smile on his face, joking with all his customers like an old and shrewd merchant — which he was although he did not come from Oltenia or from Buzau.

The thrifty business in the small retail haberdashery made his Jewish competitors think, and one day they made him an offer to buy his shop at a pretty high price, much higher than its real value. Gigi — very politely — turned them down. One of them said to him, "One day you'll quit voluntarily or you'll be taken away and we'll get rid of you, legionnaire!"

It is well known that all the active-duty officers of the Romanian army (before the communist coup d'etat during the Soviet occupation of Romania after World War II) were forbidden to belong to any political party as long as they were on active duty. If they disobeyed this order and were caught, they were excluded from the army. Gigi never sympathized with any political party. He was not a pro-legionnaire. Until 1941, as a young officer, he liked parties and women. The September, 1940

events found him far away, in northern Transylvania, at the border with Hungary, and so he did not have the chance to get closer to the legionnaire circles.

One thing must not be forgotten: Immediately after World War II, in Soviet occupied Romania, in order to do harm to someone, all one had to do was to tell the communist police that that person had been a legionnaire. Gigi's business neighbors were counting on this when they threatened him.

On March 1, 1948, Romania was not a kingdom any more but a republic just a few months old. It was Valentine's Day, and Gigi — like most husbands — could not overlook it and the traditional present that came with it together with a bouquet of snowdrops bought from a florist in Saint George Plaza, Bucharest.

He was happily walking home, thinking about his business, which was going well, and about his wife, who would enjoy the present. He had barely passed Saint George Plaza when two communist police agents stopped him and asked him to get into a waiting car where two civilians were seated. He did not understand the reason for his arrest, but he was not supposed to ask, especially since he realized — after the car started to move along the road — that the two civilians spoke very broken Romanian and smelt like Russian rats.

He was taken to a villa, somewhere near the Baneasa Bridge. Here the formalities were short: In a few hours, without even being asked his name, he was pushed into another car and taken to Constantza, a city he knew very well. He had some very pleasant memories which would soon be recalled in his presence. He was again in Constantza, the ancient Tomis of the Roman poetry and memories . . .

As he entered, taking the first step over the threshold of the K. G. B. headquarters for Romania — in the former Turkish Prison (as the locals called it) — he received the first poke. He was then searched "a la russe," that is, he was disburdened of all he had on him, beginning with shoelaces and ending with shirt buttons. Then, after receiving a few other pokes — this time much heavier — from his escort, he found himself in a cell: four dirty walls, a fixed bed made of wood with nothing on it, and a small window, covered from the outside so that one could not see the back yard or the city. All he could see was a tiny patch of Constantza sky. He still could not get hold of himself, so confounded was he by these events. He was lying in the cell, accused of having been a legionnaire, of having spread anti-Soviet

propaganda. He was made a war criminal and, in the end, charged with all possible political crimes which could be found in the penal code of the Soviets.

From that day on, they kept calling him, day and night, to tell "the truth" to the "messengers of peace." Less food, more beatings. The more he stubbornly claimed that he was not guilty, the more beatings he received.

Because a new shipment of "fresh guests" had arrived, Gigi was moved to another cell where he came across many compatriots. (The K. G. B. Romanian headquarters in Constantza was working hard indeed!). Once he was in his new cell, his morale was a little bit bolstered, seeing that there were others, too, in similar situations who were not so afraid of interrogators when called for questioning. In this cell he came across a former friend — whom he had met during the war — air force Captain M. F. After disclosing to one another the reasons for their arrival at this K. G. B. "health resort" on the shores of the Black Sea, they began to talk about their treatment. Three months had passed since Gigi's arrest, and, for the first time, he was laughing. From what his friend and the other detainees had told him, he began to be aware of the real situation. All the cellmates called in for questioning returned, sometimes with cigarettes. They were poked, too, but very seldom, depending upon their telling "the truth" the Soviets wanted to hear. Gigi was poked because — in the Soviets' opinion — he was lying. The difference in attitude between him and his cellmates was simple: He kept claiming stubbornly that he was innocent and was concerned about his future, whereas the others — though innocent — never contradicted the K. G. B. interrogators and confessed to anything, no matter what.

Gigi was terrified, waiting for the moment to be called in for questioning, thinking how much beating he would receive and how much longer he could stand it. He was figuring it out in advance like a good retail merchant!

One day, his friend, the air force captain — after gazing at him, realizing the terrible condition he was in — told him bluntly, "Don't be silly! You were a good officer in the army, decorated several times, but you can not see reality when confronted with an accomplished fact. I have a proposal for you. If you listen, you'll be able to survive in this prison, get only your preestablished sentence, and be sent to one of the forced-labor camps. Once there, we shall see." No sooner said than done. Gigi and his friend discussed their entire plan of action.

The next day, Gigi entered the interrogator's office smiling. Both the interrogator and the interpreter stared at him as if he were ready to drop an atomic bomb. They saw him smiling for the first time. Gigi, daringly, walked over to the interrogator's desk, picked up a cigar from the open box on the desk, lit it, and said in a rather nasty voice, "How do you do, Major? Today I should like to talk openly with you!"

The interrogator almost choked on his own saliva. This time, it was he who could not find the words to answer this individual who — until yesterday — used to shake when entering his office. Now he was waiting for Gigi to talk. And Gigi started talking after sitting down in a chair, crossing his legs, "Major, do you know who I am? How did you manage to discover my true identity?"

The major answered, "Of course, we know who you are and what mission you had. But to prove your honesty, you must tell us!"

Gigi continued, "I am the inspector in charge of all agents of the British Intelligence Service for Romania. And even today I can not figure out what mistake I have made so that you could discover me!"

The major was gaping at him. He could not believe his eyes since this was, indeed, a confession of extraordinary importance. He asked Gigi to repeat everything he had said to make sure he had not misunderstood him. Gigi realized that the carp had swallowed the bait. Therefore, he continued to play his cards, telling the major that he would repeat everything he had said but that the major should remember first that he, Gigi, was hungry.

The major said quickly, "If this is what concerns you, please let me know what you would like to have."

The interpreter put every word down on a sheet of paper. Gigi had barely finished asking, when a tray loaded with all the goodies on this earth was in front of him, plus a bottle of beer. After Gigi had eaten breathlessly (his belly became round like that of a Communist Party activist) the major asked him to sign what he had stated. He also asked Gigi if he was ready and willing to repeat everything once more in front of the major's superiors. Gigi agreed. For the first time, he returned to his cell not beaten, well fed and in a joyful mood.

The first act of the play was over. From that day on, the former cavalry captain and retail merchant from Lipscani Street in Bucharest was the man in the highest regard in the

K. G. B. Romanian headquarters in Constantza. The questioning began to last only as long as Gigi himself deemed fit. The investigator ceased pushing him.

After the preliminary questioning was over, the detailed questioning began. As chief inspector of the British Intelligence Service for Romania, he was asked to give a list of all the agents who had collaborated with him. He made one up with the names of all his fellows-in-arms, dead on the front line, on duty or refugees in the West. (The list is still in the secret files of the K. G. B. in Moscow.) Gigi did not give the K. G. B. any addresses, claiming that his function required just the control of all agents and not the collecting of information.

One day he was asked how his agents got their instructions and how they were rewarded. The question was asked by the interrogator in a manner suggesting that he was personally curious to find out about the methods of British Intelligence. Back in his cell, Gigi told his friend how the questioning had gone that day and — among other things — asked his advice regarding the answers he was supposed to give at the next questioning.

When several people are locked up in a cell and have no choice but to stand one another, to kill the time everyone tells different adventures from his life. One day, when Gigi was telling the others about his first three months of questioning in Constantza, he recalled, just for fun, the statement on the table of the interrogator, a statement signed by one of his competitors in the retail business on Lipscani Street in Bucharest, the merchant who falsely accused him of being a legionnaire. He also recalled that his former business competitor used to play cards on weekends in Busteni, a mountain health resort near Bucharest.

A new plan, a new idea, and an action began to work itself out in M. F.'s brain. (Among other things, he had done some reporting as a journalist during the war. So M. F. suggested an answer for future questioning.)

The next day, in the Soviet major's office, the following dialogue took place. Question: "Could you tell us how the British intelligence agents receive their information and how they are paid for their work?"

Answer: "Very simple: through the U. N. R. A. parcels and through the Red Cross shipments which come from the West. Of course, only some of the agents receive information that way!" (Gigi said this without any hesitation. His argument had a sound base, and consequently the major and his superiors bought the version. The questioning continued.)

Question: "Do you happen to know where and when your people meet?"

Answer: "Yes and no. The meetings of our agents take place in a log cabin near Busteni, in the Prahova Valley, approximately once a month, towards the end of the week. These meetings have the cover of poker parties or some other games. Of course, in order to cover this sort of action better, beautiful women are brought in, but they have nothing to do with our secret activities." (This time the "great intelligence inspector" surpassed himself.)

After two weeks, Gigi cosigned the Soviet report indicating the end of his questioning and waited to be taken to court. The interrogator was highly pleased with his great discovery, waiting for praise, a fat reward, and eventually a decoration. In his turn, Gigi was glad that the questioning had taken a turn for the better and that he had escaped beating.

At that moment, all over Romania, the Soviets ordered a general alarm. All parcels and letters were minutely censored, and every Romanian citizen who had any relationship with the West and received parcels was listed in a secret file.

Unfortunately, in some private parcels shipped to Romania through the International Red Cross, a few billets doux containing intimate trifles were found. Though their contents had nothing to do with espionage, the K. G. B. considered them coded letters. This explains the fact that in the late summer of 1949, for a rather long time, aid parcels from the West for Romania were forbidden.

The poker-club affair — near Busteni — was solved by the Soviets through "military strategy." After gathering all the necessary information regarding the next meeting, two days before that particular date, the Soviets surrounded all the access lanes to the cabin, without anybody noticing it.

Since the road to the cabin was rather steep, those coming by car had to park some distance away and from there walk up along some narrow paths to the "meeting place."

On the day of the crackdown, all those who had the bad luck to go there to play a game of poker were arrested by the K. G. B. troops even before reaching the cabin. Tightly bound and gagged, they were held hidden in the bushes until it became dark. Then they were transported to the military trucks which took them to Constantza. All those who had on them letters

from abroad, foreign currency or gold coins were detained and sentenced for espionage for the British (and, of course, for the Americans) for a period of 25 years.

The very day when cavalry Captain Gheorghe Nicolaescu received his 25-year sentence for spying for British Intelligence, he was moved to another cell. From this cell — also called "the cell of the sentenced" — he could see — (together with Captain M. F. and all the others who at that time were in the Constantza Prison) through a crack in the window which looked into the backyard of the prison (where the Soviets walked the prisoners) — some of Gigi's former business competitors from Lipscani Street in Bucharest.

In a few days a new shipment of prisoners was gathered. They were put into closed railroad cars, attached to a train loaded with scrap iron, and taken across the border into the Soviet Union.

In the Odessa Prison, where he was kept for a while, Gigi came across his former business competitors, those nice people who, aware of his innocence, had falsely reported him to the Soviet occupation forces, and who were the cause of his arrest and detention.

While being shipped from Odessa to the northern part of Russia, Nicolaescu died. His body could not endure any further the superhuman hardships imposed. Captain M. F. — sentenced to only 20 years — survived and returned to Romania at the beginning of 1956.

Here, at the Beer Cart Restaurant in Bucharest, he told me the story you have just read, the story of a man who died innocent, away from his country.

THE PRESIDENT'S COUSIN

The medley of nations gathered at Vorkuta death camps was so great that it is hardly imaginable. Here in the rolling, treeless terrain called the tundra, after the discovery of the coal fields, the central leadership of the K. G. B. found it proper to build up the camps. As I mentioned before, the special-regimen camps at Vorkuta included many levels of intellectuality and different races — people from all parts of the world. Here one could find detainees related even to the Romanovs, to some German nobility or descendants of some very important people from the intellectual, military or political classes all over the world.

At the beginning of 1950, the President of the United States of America was General Dwight Eisenhower. In Vorkuta, in Death Camp 6, one of the prisoners was the second cousin of President Eisenhower. He had been sentenced to 25 years for spying for the Americans. How had he gotten into a Soviet death camp, and why was there no one to intervene on his behalf?

Between 1947 and 1948, this Eisenhower, a British subject, went to Europe to revisit the grave of his mother in a cemetery in Vienna. Actually he travelled to Vienna from Ethiopia, where he had a horse-breeding farm. On all his trips, Eisenhower was accompanied by his valet, who had been in his service since he was a youth. At the time of his arrival in Vienna, this city of Johann Strauss was divided into four zones. The Soviet zone stretched over the greater part of the city, and it so happened that the cemetery was located in this zone. After buying a bunch of flowers, Eisenhower and his valet drove in a limousine (rented from the hotel they were staying at) to the border of the Soviet zone. Here, they parked the limousine and walked a few hundred feet to the cemetery. After looking at his mother's grave, which he had not visited for a long time, carried away by the weight of his recollections, he left the cemetery with his valet through the main gate.

They had barely walked a few yards when, passing a dark-colored car, they encountered two civilians who "invited" them into the vehicle. When they inquired about the reason, the civilians told them it was "a little formality."

Only after arriving at the K. G. B. headquarters in Vienna did they realize where they were. They were immediately charged with spying for the Americans and sentenced to 25 years each. The Soviets did not even bother to notify the American or the British government, whose citizens they were.

After several extended stopovers through the prisons of Great Russia, in 1952 Mr. Eisenhower arrived in Death Camp 6 in Vorkuta. Being over 60 years of age, both Eisenhower and his valet were considered handicapped people.

On the last Sunday of August, 1952 — "Miner's Day" in the Soviet Union — Eisenhower (with a newspaper in his hand and followed by his inseparable companion, his valet) walked over to political officer Shishkyu and pointed to the headlines and the picture of the President of the United States, Dwight Eisenhower, on the front page. Then he said, "Mr. Officer, look! This is my cousin, and I am asking you to inform your superiors that I am hereby lodging a strong protest against my

being detained forcibly here, in the Soviet camps."

The poor man could not imagine — even after all these years — that he was confined here perhaps for good and that neither the President of the United States nor the Queen of England could save him.

The Soviet officer stared at him and (after endeavoring to grasp the meaning of the sentence spoken in broken Russian) realizing what he meant, said laughing, "What is your number, sir?" And, pointing at the number on Eisenhower's coat, the officer continued, "Eisenhower is President in the United States of America; you are here. Your name is the number you wear. Please let me alone. I've heard this kind of story before!"

The poor man was stunned. In spite of his education and intellectual background, he could not understand the Soviet's lecture.

The Germans, Romanians, and Hungarians in the camp helped him as much as they could. During June, 1953, he was taken to an unknown destination.

THE PADDED OVERCOAT

Day by day, the entire world was breathlessly listening to the reports coming from the European fronts and especially developments in the Balkans after Romania signed the armistice with the Allied forces in 1944.

After losing Romania, the Germans started to plan a counter-attack against the Russians. Among the first planned military operations of the German Army Command regarding Romania was the parachuting — towards the end of the fall of 1944 — of several groups of soldiers with special missions. All these parachute drops were done in the Fagaras mountains and in the Small and Semenic mountains in the province of Banat. The majority of the paratroopers who made up these groups were of German descent, born in those Romanian regions. They had enlisted in the German army as volunteers or as specialists for such missions.

I had the opportunity to meet such a man. He told me many interesting things, facts linked directly to my family; to be more precise, facts linked to some of my relatives in Banat. This man was the agronomist Josef Komanchek, originally from the outskirts of Timisoara.

Right now he was working as a barber at the central bath

of the camp of Mine 7. After talking about this and that, I found out from him that he knew some of my relatives very well because his fate had been linked to one of them, from Resitza. It was not only fate but also luck that he had met — in a rather complicated circumstance — Doctor Karl Vanya.

Thus, Josef Komanchek began the story of his adventures. "After receiving the command of a group of special troops, I was parachuted near the village of Franzdorf, at the foot of the Semenic mountains, not far from Resitza, in the late fall of 1944. The mission was a purely military one, like all missions given at that time. I think it does not make sense to talk about it because I didn't get the chance to begin it. I was arrested. Due to the rough terrain and to adverse weather conditions, the drop was made far away from the projected spot. In addition, upon falling to the ground among some rocks, I fractured my leg. The others — who were parachuted with me and who, in their turn, were blown by the wind in different directions — I did not see again.

Josef Komanchek
Pencil drawing by Julius Stuermer
Vorkuta, 1949

"It is possible that our military operation had been known to the Romanian command or it may well be that — by pure chance — I was discovered in a short while and arrested by a group of Romanian gendarmes.

"Due to my accident, in which I had fractured my leg, they had to carry me to the nearest peasant house, where they tried to give me first aid. The commander of the gendarmes — who reported my capture to his superiors — was ordered to bring a physician to examine my leg. They brought Doctor Karl Vanya, of German descent.

"The doctor and I were the only ones in the room. The

gendarme was standing guard at the door, aware that I could not escape because of my fractured leg.

"After examining me and putting my leg in a temporary cast, Doctor Vanya said sadly, 'I can't do anything else for you!' Then he whispered to me, 'I have been informed by the commander of the gendarmes that you will be taken to the supreme command. Therefore, if you have any wish or if you want to let someone know about it, tell me and I shall do whatever is possible.'

"After briefly explaining my situation, I made him understand that I was aware of my fate and that I had no chance to escape. I had no one to be informed about me, nothing to convey to anybody. All I asked him was to put on my overcoat — it was hanging on the rack — and leave. Doctor Vanya was greatly astonished when he looked at both our overcoats on the rack. By pure coincidence, they were the same color and differed only in quality. (Our entire group of paratroopers had been dressed as civilians for better camouflage.) The doctor began to ponder and asked me the reason for my desire. I told him then that the overcoat was stuffed with money all over inside the lining. He asked, 'What shall I do with this money?'

"I answered, 'The task left to you is to give it out to those in need: widows or families whose husbands and sons have been or still are in the German army.'

"Our conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a group of military sent especially for me. A last glance and Vanya took my overcoat as a sign that he accepted my proposal. What he did with the money I do not know. However, I hope that many families could be helped.

"I was taken and carried from prison to prison until I reached Moscow, where I was sentenced to only 10 years. You may laugh, but at that time they used to give you just 10 years, not 25 like today."

. . . . . .

After my release by the Soviets, in 1955, and my repatriation to Romania (the country in which I was born) and not to Germany (the country whose citizen I was and where I was arrested) I decided to go to Resitza.

Doctor Vanya's family told me that he had died. Therefore, I dould not talk to him personally. My curiosity, however, kept bugging me. I wanted by all means to know the end of the story heard at Vorkuta. Since the main witness who could give me the necessary explanations was gone, I began to make my own

inquiries among other acquaintances and among members of Vanya's family, from whom I hoped to find out something.

So I found out that many poor families had found envelopes with money in their mailboxes or under their door mats, without any explanation and without the address of the sender.

At that time they were talking about an aid committee which would work illegally. No one suspected that that committee was nothing else but a rumor and that one man, Vanya, gave out that money to the last penny. It was well known that the doctor treated the poor free of charge — a fact which made him loved very much. Both Vanya and his family lived very modestly. Therefore, he was nicknamed "the poor doctor."

The "poor doctor," Karl Vanya, together with his parents

DEPORTED CIVILIAN OR PRISONER OF WAR

In January, 1945, a great many of the Romanian citizens of German descent from Resitza and the surrounding areas — as well as from all of Romania — were forcibly deported to the U. S. S. R. to perform reconstruction work.

This time, again, Fate had to give a blow to our family — as in 1941 when the German troops forced my parents, my sister, and me to leave Romania as undesirables — leaving marks of deep sorrow in us.

About the time when, at Nuremberg the war criminals — the leaders of the Third Reich — were being sentenced to death and executed by the Allied forces for crimes against humanity, the Soviet authorities released — with all papers in order — a man whom they had deported forcibly, and without any justification, from his own country.

Franz Alois Vanya, born in 1899 in Romania, a resident of Resitza, 3 Siretului Street, was deported to the U. S. S. R. on

January 13, 1945, together with his 16-year-old son, Alois. The terrible hardships to which all deportees had been exposed kept tens of thousands of them from returning home from the Soviet slave camps.

What can be more painful for a father than to see his son die in his own arms because of undernourishment in spite of the fact that the father himself gave his son part of his food ration to save him. Alois Vanya, a 16-year-old innocent youngster, had to pay with his own life for the fact that he had been born in a family of German descent.

Franz Alois Vanya, a Romanian citizen of German descent, immediately after his release from the Soviet concentration camps Brandenburg, 1946

Alois Vanya died of starvation on June 2, 1946, in the arms of his father, in Death Camp Number 8002, 18 kilometers from Sverdlovsk.

The apotheosis of humanity raised on top of the altar of Soviet glory and trumpeted to all corners of the world by T. A. S. S. in 1946 was the news that the Soviets were beginning to free the first groups of war prisoners. In a shipment of "prisoners of war" — accompanied by the military unit with the postal military number 61948 — Franz Alois Vanya was set free in the city of Brandenburg in the Soviet occupation zone, on October 10, 1946. He was shipped there from the Sverdlovsk camp.

Vanya was considered a member of the German army by the Soviets and set free in Brandenburg, East Germany. The truth is he was never a member of the German army or of any subunit in this army. He was a Romanian of German descent deported by the Soviet troops from the city of Resitza, Romania, to reconstruction work in the U. S. S. R. He was by no means deported from Brandenburg, Germany. He is one of the few fathers whose sons died in their arms.

The majority of the fathers never found out and will never find out where their sons were buried or how the members of their families died in the thousands of death camps in the Soviet Union.

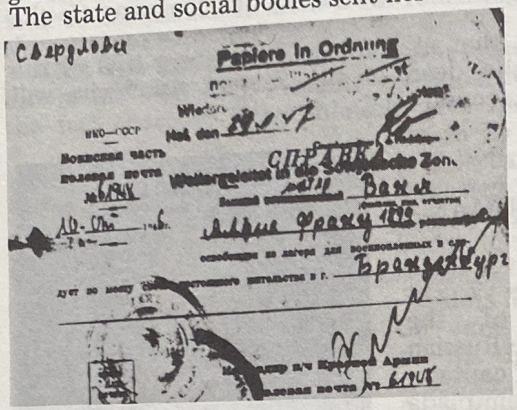
I do hope and wish that at a future Nuremberg trial of the communist criminals, the dead of the Eastern Auschwitz will be able to take the accuser's bench.

KABILA AND THE HUMAN GUINEA PIGS

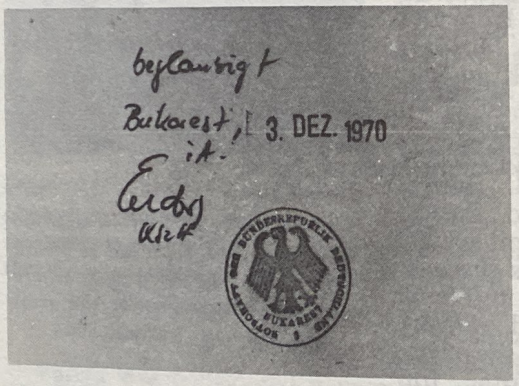
Alois Vanya – a child arrested by the Soviets and deported to Death Camp 8002 near Sverdlovsk, where he died of starvation in the arms of his father. Resitza, 1944

In Camp 2, Mine 7, at Vorkuta, the head of the medical team was a Russian woman, with the rank of captain, by the name of Olimpiada Sergeevna Grishchina. Towards the end of 1951, her replacement was Kirilova (Kabila), a young female physician who had graduated recently from the Faculty of Medicine in Moscow and was sent to work in the death camp for political detainees with special regimen, of course with the approval of the superior K. G. B. body. Grishchina had worked during the war in a military unit which was in Hungary towards the end of 1945. Therefore, it could not be surprising and it was even probable that she was transferred to Vorkuta for intervening sometimes on behalf of an arrested person; or for seeing too much injustice done and too many untruths spoken which had been distorted for her before, at the political indoctrination courses. Generally speaking, the deportment of this female doctor with the rank of captain was acceptable if one keeps in mind the limitation of the possibility of doing good.

Doctor Kirilova was a different kind of woman. After graduating from the faculty, she did not have time to breathe. The state and social bodies sent her where she was needed. Indeed, she was a young woman, thirsty for life, and when she arrived at Vorkuta — where women were a rarity — she looked like a rosebud a man gives as a present to his sweetheart on the New Year and the sweetheart is surprised and wants to know where the rosebud came from. Likewise, the appearance of the young female physician (tall and well endowed physically) exercised the force of a magnet, attracting the entire troop of uniformed men of the K. G. B., who, like everybody else, longed for some pleasant moments of happiness.



The release papers of the so-called prisoner of war – in fact a Romanian civilian of German descent deported by the Soviets – Franz A. Vanya



Authentication of the document – on back – by the West German embassy in Bucharest

Her appearance on the first medical commission — which gathered 3 or 4 times a year — made many tremble for the sake of their "physical fitness" classification. At first everyone thought that she might be stricter and would not leave everything in the hands of the detainee-doctors.

The K. G. B. people and their collaborators spent their spare time carousing until they dropped exhausted. They could afford this sort of luxury because their work went on even without them.

Whereas no one could tell any funny stories or tales of amorous adventures regarding the former female head doctor, the bad mouths started to talk very quickly about her young replacement. The soldiers who guarded us at work, outside the camp zone, one day began to mention the new nickname of the lady doctor, "Kabila," which in Russian means "mare." Her happy paramour was an aging lieutenant colonel who could pass for her grandfather. He had been assigned to Camp Number 2 and had the function of deputy camp commander. The commander of the camp was Major Malik. He was one of the few Soviet officers — educated and very correct — whom I was able to know during my stay in the Soviet death camps. He was the only officer in the administration of Camp 2 who — whenever on duty — did not take the liberty of eating food other than the food prepared at the kitchen for the detainees. He came from the city of Leningrad, and his family did not live at Vorkuta. His wife and one daughter came to Vorkuta very seldom, and while there they sat at the window and watched the passing of the unending columns of detainees. Mrs. Malik was indeed a true lady in behavior, dress and in the way she looked at the unfortunate people passing in columns. Her daughter was made of the same mettle. It could be clearly seen that both Malik and his family disliked his work and high rank of camp commander. Undoubtedly, he was atoning for the sin of whistling in a communist holy place, most likely in a Soviet house of culture.

Many soldiers, noncommissioned officers and officers had been made "happy" for a few moments by the young female doctor — if they were good looking.

As soon as Kabila showed up at work in the morning and had her first conversation with the detainee-doctor, one could tell how she had spent her evening. Doctor Karol, a Ukrainian from Lithuania who was the detainee-head doctor, had the honor of reporting to Kabila every morning. If, when coming out of the medical office, Karol had his hand on his head, it meant trouble; if he was whistling, it meant that last night Kabila had been satisfied and was in a good mood.

After World War II ended, there was a big trial of some Nazi physicians at Nuremberg. All those implicated had been charged with taking part in experiments on prisoners, or with crimes in the Nazi concentration camps. Guilty or not, the Nazi

physicians received their sentences from the high tribunal of the Allied occupation troops in Germany.

A murder is a very serious offense especially when the assassin is known but can not be charged as such because of his social position. Doctor Kirilova was responsible for and guilty of the death of Petersen, a political prisoner of German descent.

Petersen was serving a 25-year sentence passed by a military tribunal in the Soviet occupation zone of Germany. He had been charged with spying for the British. After a lengthy questioning by the K. G. B. in Germany — he was physically weak and on top of that undernourished during questioning — the medical commission from Camp 2, Mine 7, declared him unfit for work. Here was a man who had not yet reached the age of 25 but who was in such a miserable condition that even the Soviet medical commission admitted that he had been undernourished. He now could remain in the so-called "brigade of death" until the next medical commission gathered. (Any individual in this "brigade" was immediately transferred back into a work brigade if he recovered a little bit physically.)

Being a quiet and very nice man, Petersen was liked by the entire group in the camp at that time. It is very difficult to be liked by everybody, but Petersen was this kind of fellow.

One day, painter Julius Stuermer asked him to try to do some cleaning in a small barrack (separate from the other barracks) where some of the detainees' supervisors lived together with the painters and all those active in the work at the camp's cultural house. The barrack being small, there was not too much or too hard work to be done there. By working there, Petersen had the chance to double his food ration by eating the leftovers from the meals of the camp supervisors.

Unfit to work, but starting to work voluntarily as a cleaning man in this barrack, Petersen now had a chance — in the distant future, after two or even three gatherings of the medical commission — to avoid the usual assignment of working in a brigade in the mine (even if he recovered physically).

He heartily embraced Julius Stuermer's suggestion, and he was accepted by all the dwellers of the small barrack since, as I said, he was a quiet boy, very obliging and knew how to keep his mouth shut and not see what needed not to be seen.

In approximately three months, young Petersen recovered pretty well. One night, at the beginning of 1952, one of the barrack's dwellers got up to move his bowels and heard Petersen groaning in his bed. Since Petersen's Russian was very poor,

the dweller woke up Julius Stuermer, telling him that his friend was sick. Perspiring, with high fever and stomach cramps, Petersen tossed about in his bed until daybreak, when the barracks were unlocked. He was immediately taken to the "hospital." The diagnosis given by the medical commission was acute appendicitis, and the decision was immediate surgery. At the surgery department, the head surgeon was a Tartar, Faraksin, originally from the Crimea, who was very sympathetic towards Romanians. Since Stuermer was a Romanian of German descent, he asked the surgeon in Romanian (of which Faraksin understood and spoke a little) to help take care of young Petersen. An appendectomy is an easy procedure for an experienced surgeon, and in approximately ten days Petersen could have been discharged from the hospital.

Everything was ready for the surgery. Updated about this urgent case, reported by the head surgeon and doctor-detainee Karol, Doctor Kirilova left her office and went to the surgery room. She ordered Faraksin to delay for a few minutes the administration of the anesthesia because she wanted to perform the surgery herself.

Kirilova performed the surgery and the patient died. During the operation, she made some incorrect incisions, which caused internal hemorrhage, and Petersen could not be saved. The chief surgeon, Doctor Faraksin, tried to intervene, but Kirilova refused to let him. Also present at the operation was male nurse Abdukadir — an Uzbek — in permanent attendance at any surgery.

After verifying the death, Kirilova ordered those around her not to tell anyone that the patient had died on the operating table or to divulge the cause of the patient's death. She advised them to say that one hour after the successful surgery, the patient had a heart attack. Her version of the death was based on an earlier diagnosis, given a few months previously: "Body is very weak, heart resistance unpredictable."

This is how a political prisoner who should not have died, died! Only the arrogance of Kirilova — who wanted to show her superior skills — led to this tragic end. But she was not held responsible! Why?

Each of the detainees was compelled to appear before a medical commission, which would decide upon his physical classification so he could be assigned to a specific place of work. The commission was made up of physician-detainees supervised and directed by the head physician or by his assistant.

The detainee or political prisoner to be examined had to stand naked and parade in front of the commission. At the entrance to the examination room where the commission was seated, the detainee had to tell his name to the male nurse-secretary, who had the entire file of the prisoners wherein their work classifications had been marked. The physicians sat on chairs, and the main seat was taken by the head doctor, who was either an army officer or a civilian. Next to him was the main detainee-physician, who recorded in the file the work classification established by consensus of the entire commission. The main detainee-doctor was at that time the internist Doctor Krispanovich, a Jew from Lithuania, assisted by surgeon Faraksin and two or three other doctors of different specialties. At the end of the line there was head detainee-doctor Karol, a Ukrainian from Lithuania. Each physician would ask the detainee if he was suffering from any disease or if he had any complaint regarding his work classification and wanted it changed. If the detainee had no complaint, he would pass quickly by the commission, turning a few times around so as to show his entire body to the head physician. Then he had to hand over his card — which he was holding in his hand — to the main detainee-physician, who recorded on it the detainee's new work classification, irrevocable for another period of several months.

Since the head physician, Doctor Olimpiada Grishchina, had some social duties to perform and was not always present at this medical check-up, her place would be taken by Doctor Kirilova. The methods for giving out work classifications were the same as those used all over the Soviet Union where they had detainees, political prisoners, prisoners of war and convicts. All of these were taken to be checked by a medical commission. There were the same Soviet instructions for determining a detainee's health because I witnessed the same methods at Bautzen, Sachsenhausen, Brest-Litovsk, Moscow and Vorkuta: The detainee was told to move the joints of his hands and legs, to open his mouth so that they could see his teeth, and then he was pinched on the buttocks — exactly as they do at the cattle auctions where the buyer has to judge the health of the animal he intends to buy.

At the water-pumping station in Mine 7 — the deepest underground working place of the entire mine — among other workers there was one called Vaska. I don't recall his last name. He had been a major lieutenant in the Soviet air force. Undoubtedly, he too had whistled in one of the Soviet holy places because

he had to serve a 25-year sentence. Vaska was the type of Russian — as we know from Dostoevsky's descriptions — from somewhere on the banks of the River Volga. He was in his late twenties, well built and intellectually superior to many former Soviet military officers of much higher rank. He preferred this kind of job as man in charge of the water pumps, which was not hard labor though it involved great danger: If an accident happened in the mine, he would have been the last to evacuate. In any advantage there is a disadvantage. In any case, Vaska had assumed this kind of risk.

In the camp's everyday life, Vaska was known as a likeable fellow. He respected everyone and did not allow anyone — even the hardened criminals who were the Mafia of the camps — to mock him. As far as his health was concerned, he had an exceptionally strong body and did not complain about anything. Therefore, he had been given the highest work classification, which assigned him to work in the mine.

At the second gathering of the medical commission in 1952, due to the absence of the head physician, Doctor Grishchina, Kirilova took her place.

Like any other detainee, Vaska showed up in front of the medical commission. To the surprise of everyone else, he was not completely naked as stipulated by the rule. He had an athletic supporter on. Of course, he did not have to be afraid of any change in his work classification, but showing up in front of the medical commission was a must, and, rushing back from work, Vaska took off his clothes in the toilet but, in a hurry, left his supporter on and quickly entered the medical office, where the commission was seated. It looked as if Vaska was making an appearance. Anyway, when he stood in front of Kirilova, she realized that he was not completely undressed as the rule required. She turned immediately to Doctor Karol and pointed out that no privileges were permitted by the commission. Consequently, she insisted that Vaska take off his supporter immediately.

Both Vaska and Karol tried to persuade Kirilova that Vaska did not need a medical check-up in order to change his work classification and that Vaska was doing his duty by just showing up in front of the commission. But she adamantly insisted that Vaska undress completely.

Vaska was a bullheaded kind of guy and could not stand having a young woman doctor — who shortly after her arrival in the camp got the nickname Kabila — mock him, and therefore

he decided to counterattack. So he walked right into the toilet of the ambulatory hospital, took off his supporter, got an erection and walked back into the medical office, where the medical commission and Kirilova were waiting for him. His reappearance created a sensation in the entire medical body. It was the first time a detainee had dared such an act in the camp. Vaska always passed for a respectful, intelligent man. What made him act the way he did?

The moment she saw him entering in his new posture, Kirilova exploded like an atomic bomb. In rude words, she addressed herself to Karol, demanding that this impertinent detainee be thrown out of the medical office and that the political officer be called immediately. All the physicians present chuckled, and in the lobby of the ambulatory hospital not very kind words were heard addressed to Kirilova regarding her abusive language — similar to that of a common criminal — used against the entire medical team which was present.

Major Lieutenant Prokhurov, chief of the K. G. B. supervisory group in the camp, arrived after only a few minutes and asked for clarifications regarding the incident. Afterwards, he walked out into the lobby and came across Vaska, who by now had become the hero of the day. In front of all the detainees, he asked Vaska what had happened.

He answered, "Nothing, Comrade Major Lieutenant! I am a young man and Doctor Kirilova is a beautiful woman, and as soon as my little Vaska saw her, he got aroused. I knew this was going to happen, and therefore I left my jock on!"

Major Lieutenant Prokhurov was well aware of the situation; he also knew Doctor Kirilova and her amorous escapades with all the men she could get her hands on. But, in front of the entire camp, he had to take some punitive action. So he punished Vaska with three days' incarceration for breaking the rules of behavior in the camp. Surprisingly, however, after only two hours of incarceration, Vaska was taken out of the cell and sent urgently to the mine to help repair a water pump which had gotten stuck. In this way, his punishment was annulled.

The news about Vaska's athletic supporter spread like lightning, passing from mouth to mouth among the detainees and especially among the soldiers on duty. And everybody had a scream.

Very soon, Kirilova was transferred to another camp to substitute for the head physician, who had gone on vacation. What had happened in the camp of Mine 7 was known here for

a long time. Therefore, the prisoners talked about her as they would about a tramp from Pigalle or Saint Pauli.

A group of hard-core criminals who used to play cards decided that whoever lost at the game had to play a trick on Kirilova, so that from that time on she would learn to show respect to criminals, too.

The card game lasted all night. By daybreak, it was unanimously decided: The man who lost had to show up at Kirilova's office for a check-up the following day.

The prisoner entered the office without having made any appointment and without giving the male secretary-nurse any chance to stop him. Actually, the secretary-nurse was prevented from rushing into Kirilova's office by a load of spittle which caught him right between the eyes. (This was an old camp custom to debase someone completely.) Any opposition on his part could have cost him much more. Therefore, he resigned himself by remaining quietly in his place.

When the prisoner entered, Kirilova asked him what he wanted. He said that he was very sick and asked her to exempt him from work. When she asked him if he had seen the detainee-physicians, he answered — in a slang familiar mostly to hard-core criminals — that he did not want to have anything to do with Nazi doctors and that he wanted to be examined only by her since she was beautiful.

What Kirilova lacked was camp life experience. She did not realize the situation she had gotten into. In a nasty voice, she told the perpetrator to leave the office and called the secretary-nurse in a loud voice. When he, together with two or three other prisoners from the nursing service, opened the door, the perpetrator realized that he was being cornered without yet fulfilling his task. Therefore, he grabbed the inkpot and splashed its contents over Kirilova's face and white gown.

The witnesses who were standing in the doorway disappeared instantly so as not to be accused of participating in this. However, they spread the news about what had happened throughout the camp, and before the political officer was informed about it, the whole camp was laughing.

The author of the deed was the hero of the day, celebrated and respected by everyone. Thus Kirilova swallowed another pill at Vorkuta. The new hero was punished with three weeks in the isolation building, which he heartily accepted. It was not too hard a punishment, considering the fact that he was used to such "sick leaves."

UNCLE VERDES

It was at the beginning of June, 1953, that a new bombshell changed the course of events. It was clear that something was coming in the life of the political prisoners. Errands were run from one end of the camp to the other, taking and bringing back orders and answers needed by the personnel department.

There we were — by chance — several sick people in front of the surgery department. Among us was Uncle Verdes. Another Romanian from Bessarabia, Attorney Cara (a former military officer who had worked for Bureau 2 during the war) walked over to us. Cara was serving a sentence for espionage and treason against the motherland. In spite of the fact that he was Romanian, the Soviets considered him a Soviet citizen (since Bessarabia was now in Soviet hands and the Soviets picked holes) and had sentenced him to the customary 25 years.

In 1950, with my arrival in the death camp of Mine 7, I found Cara there. He had been working in the office of the military officer in charge of camp transit: income and outgo of people and things. Since the officer was of Romanian descent, the Romanian prisoners were always the first to know about any move or steps taken by the Soviet authorities. On the right side of his name, on the card in the camp file, every prisoner was also marked with numbers, dots and mathematical symbols drawn after a secret K. G. B. code. By looking just once at them, someone familiar with the code could immediately form a clear opinion on that particular prisoner.

I had the opportunity — together with Tanase — to take a look at the card with the most numerous symbols and signs in our camp, that of the German General Becker, on whose card there were 17 such symbols.

Cara walked over to us and, stretching out his hand to Verdes, said, "Uncle Verdes, you are getting out of this hell. You will be going home. In three days you will leave the camp. By a decree coming from Moscow, a group of over 160 persons — all foreign citizens of different nationalities among which are Germans, Hungarians, Romanians, Poles, Chinese, and only one Soviet citizen — will go home (of course, via another 'accommodation' camp). Who do you think is the Soviet citizen who will leave?"

Attorney Cara answered his own question, "Julius Stuermer's friend, Pyotr Yakir, the criminal! If they let him go, it means

that many wheels will start spinning (wheels which so far have been still) in Moscow. We shall be in for many surprises from now on! You, Uncle Verdes, where would you like to go? To Romania since you have been registered as a Romanian citizen, or to Bessarabia, where you were born? Make up your mind now, quickly, to give me time to make a change which lies within the limits of my capacity now, while there is still time!"

Verdes answered, "I want to go to Romania because I've been Romanian since my mother gave birth to me. And Bessarabia is a Romanian province even if now, for a while, it is under the Russian yoke!"

Now let us find out a little more about Uncle Verdes. In 1936 we find him functioning as a notary at the mayor's office in the village where he was born, on the banks of the Dniester, south of Soroca. After a hot summer day, Uncle Verdes, together with a friend, drank heavily at the village pub. Then he went to the home of one of his neighbors and drank again until midnight. Back home, Verdes, the notary, found his wife fuming, ready to quarrel and raise hell. A quiet man by nature, Verdes disregarded the abuse and insults hurled by his wife on him and his drinking companion. She did not let them into the house, telling them to go back where they had come from.

At this particular time they were not very choosy. All they wanted was a sleeping place, even in a hay stack, that is, not to be licked by wandering dogs in a ditch at the outskirts of the village because, in this case, word about Mr. Notary's feat would have spread across nine villages.

Anyway, since Verdes' wife sent them back where they had come from and since they could not go there, they decided — at the suggestion of his drinking companion — to go to the latter's house, in the neighboring village, further down on the banks of the Dniester. And instead of walking, they said to themselves, "Let's go by boat!"

No sooner said than done! They walked towards the bank of the Dniester, got there safe and sound, and Mr. Notary was the first to jump into a boat which was rocking on the river, near the bank. His drinking companion did not want to follow suit. Staggering from intoxication, he lay down on the bank and fell asleep right away.

Intrigued by the fact that his companion had not followed him, Mr. Notary became obstinate, too, and — just in defiance — lay down in the boat and fell asleep.

He was awakened by some strong kicks in the ribs, and when

he opened his eyes to see what was going on, he was stunned and could not grasp the situation immediately. In front of him there were two Soviet border guards, and he was lying on the banks of the River Dniester but . . . on the Soviet side! (When, later on, he reconstructed in his mind the possibilities for and against his getting to the Soviet side of the Dniester, he came to the conclusion that, after he had fallen asleep in the boat, it went a little bit down into the water due to the new weight, and the current of the stream kept coming harder, and, little by little, it pulled from the ground the pole to which the boat's rope was tied and dragged it along as it drifted downstream. Undoubtedly the current had taken the boat to the Soviet side of the river, where he apparently woke up, got out of the boat, took a few steps, then, stumbling over a stone, fell down and passed out on the spot.)

Since he had been dead drunk, he could not recall exactly what had happened. In any case, he was now in the hands of the Soviets, and reality would make him pay dearly for his pleasure.

Turned over to the K. G. B. by the Soviet border guards, Verdes was "discovered" to be a great spy, especially because he was employed by the Romanian state in a clerical position, i. e., public notary, and spoke Russian, too.

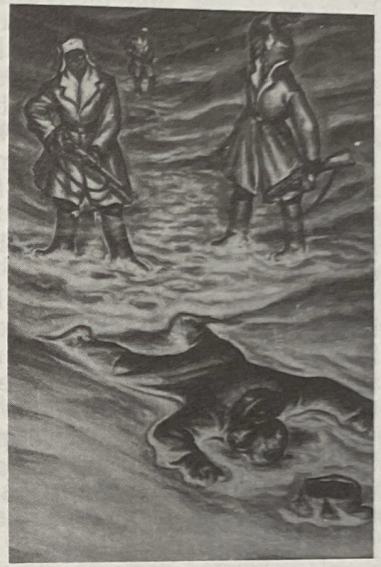
All these brought him the blessings of a tribunal with a sentence of 20 years. After passing through many death camps, in 1939 Verdes found himself in the famous death camp of Kamchatka. By the time he got here, he was only skin and bones. He was one of the few survivors who reached their destination. During their shipment by sea from Vladivostok, more than 60 per cent of the detainees died as a result of a typhoid epidemic which caused havoc. In Kamchatka, few survived and were able to go back home. There was no chance of escape! The only means of reaching civilization was by ship. At that time there was no railroad or highway to link this inferno with the rest of the world. There had been some escapes, but the great majority of the escapees were caught and brought back to the death camp or, to be more precise, to the gate of the camp, where their corpses were thrown as intimidation against future attempts to escape. However, people did not let themselves be scared by these punishments, and, from time to time, there were others who gave it a try.

From the day he arrived at Kamchatka, as a survivor of the typhoid epidemic on board the ship, and while working in a

camp cutting lumber for the gold mines, Verdes never stopped planning to escape since, besides death, escape was the only way out of this hell and his only chance to see the beautiful landscapes of his childhood in Romania.

After getting used to the climate of that region, and after his body had strengthened again, in May, 1941, Verdes, and five other prisoners made a successful escape.

Their planned escape route was not the one along which they had come here, i. e., the seaway. They took towards the west, crossing the Kamchatka mountains, cutting across the taiga towards the southeast, and trying in this way to get to the Trans-Siberian Railroad or to another spot from where they could move with less difficulty.



Painting by Julius Stuermer

A new communist victory: the killing of the escaped prisoner

Here is how Verdes and his companions in Fate prepared and carried out their escape, in Verdes' own words: "At first there were four of us: two Russians (who had been sentenced to hard labor for life, both from the region of the Volga), a Ukrainian from Odessa and me. Afterwards the two Russians brought along two young boys from the region of the Ural mountains. Since our group grew larger — from 4 to 6 — and, in fact, became too large to allow us to sneak through the virgin forest which separated Kamchatka from civilization, I protested at first; but the Russians, especially one of them, advised me to mind my own business because they claimed they knew well what they were doing. I could not get out of it since they would have killed me on the spot.

"We planned the getaway for the end of May when the forest was green and it could provide us with something to eat. Meanwhile, each of us procured in time approximately one kilogram

of sugar as well as about three kilograms of bread crumbs and a knife.

"The two Russians also had on them a hatchet and an ax. As for clothing, we took care to have good, warm things but only as many as we could put on us. Besides food, we had nothing to carry except a blanket. The escape took place. We successfully managed to depart from the camp. Fate also helped us since at that time many shipments came and went, and many slept in an improvised camp in the woods. After many escapades, in September, 1943, we got somehow closer to civilization, but we did not dare come too close to it. We always kept a distance of 10 to 20 kilometers from a highway which joined several camps of detainees. Had we gotten too close to them, we would have endangered ourselves. Out of six who had started, there were only four of us left. The two youngsters — who had joined us in the last moment before our get-away — disappeared along the road at a time when we were starving and starting to curse our fate frequently.

"Only much later on did I realize that something was fishy because each time after one of the youngsters disappeared, the two Russians returned from a short hunting trip with meat which they had baked very well since we hadn't been able to take much salt with us when we had made our escape.

"During the summer we put on moccasins made of linden bark. The Ukrainian was a master at weaving them. When along our way we came across a pond or stream rich in fish, we tried to gather a larger supply of food to take with us. Very often we set traps, and we cleaned all the birds' nests of eggs. It was very hard going, but we were free, and that meant a lot to us. In any case, the main thing was to keep up our morale.

"The lack of the usual nourishment began to leave marks. Scurvy, that is the lack of vitamin 'C' — in spite of the fact that we ate much cock sorrel and roots — was gaining a lot of ground in our bodies. We had hoped to be in a safe place before winter set in, but the rainy weather overturned our plans. We traveled 20 or 30 kilometers from a highway, which became our guide mark.

"One night I unexpectedly overheard the conversation between the two Russians and the Ukrainian. They decided to kill me and use me for food in case something fat did not fall into the trap during the following days. Only then did I realize the fate of the two youngsters who had disappeared along the road. They had been taken along with us in the last moment, just

to serve as food which did not have to be carried since it could walk by itself. Now it was my turn. I could not keep up with the pace of the march which the three had been trying to impose lately. They were apparently delayed by my slow walking.

"The thought of dying, of being murdered and eaten by my road companions scared me. I had to make an urgent decision. After we returned to the small hut we had erected, I quickly packed up my bags in such a way as not to arouse suspicion. At night when my turn came to be on guard and to keep the fire burning, I ran away leaving my companions at the mercy of their fate. By now I had decided to try my best to get to the highway and give myself up to the authorities, regardless of what was in store for me, because to continue on my way meant sure death.

"At dawn I climbed up a rather tall, bushy tree, binding myself to it so as not to fall down in case I fell asleep. I remained there for the rest of the day. During the day I heard my companions calling me from all sides, but I did not dare to answer, knowing what to expect from them. I also heard them calling the next day though further and further away. I have no idea what happened to them.

"In a few days I got to the highway which, in fact, was a forest road, a road partly washed away by rain and along which, from time to time, a car would pass — an old 1926 Ford creaking and snuffling from all joints. After I had been waiting for approximately three hours, such a Ford appeared. To my amazement, the driver and his companion were not at all surprised at seeing me, and they told me that I was not the first to give myself up or to whom something like this had happened. In this region there were a lot of runaway groups. The two only wondered why we had not come across some of them.

"I was handed over to the first camp we came across along the road. The political officer and the camp commander listened to my story, and instead of roughing me up, they put me in the camp's hospital. Perhaps they felt sorry for me due to the fact that I looked miserable. Meanwhile they made some investigations regarding the camp I had run away from and they found out — to my great luck — that the camp had been dissolved one year before.

"The commander of the camp where I was handed over needed people, and so he kept me there. If my former camp had still existed, he would have had to send me back there, and who knows what my fate would have been there? But since law is

law and it is abided by everywhere — especially in the Soviet Union — I was sentenced by a tribunal to an additional 5-year term, just on the basis of my uncoerced confessions. In 1947, they took me to Vorkuta. Right now I am told that I shall go home. But where is my home?"

During all this time, Uncle Verdes never tried — though he had the chance — to send some message to his wife or relatives. I don't know why, but in any case he never mentioned it. This is how Verdes ended his story. Did he go back to Romania? If so, what was in store for him there? Who knows?

UNCLE JOE TAKES CARE

In February, 1955, during my transfer from Vorkuta to Potma, I traveled with stopovers at Vologda and then at Moscow in the Krasni Pres Prison, which reminded me of my old friend Pyotr Ivanovich. After only a few days' stay, I had to go back to the road.

But since we were in Moscow, we wanted to know more, to see more, especially the change of faces. They kept saying all over that with the death of the criminal dictator Joseph Stalin and with the arrest of his man, Beria, a new political order, a new life would begin in the history of the Soviet state. Well, all these turned out to be lies. Nothing changed, and Krasni Pres remained a transit prison as before.

One day my bed neighbor, a Russian from the outskirts of Moscow, with a sentence of 25 years as traitor to the motherland, said to me, laughing, "We cry because they have locked us up, but their day of reckoning is not that far. Don't you see? Since Uncle Joe's death, many heads have rolled, some to the right, others to the left. In the next cell, for instance, there are two K. G. B. agents in the Petrov case."

"What Petrov?" I asked.

"The one in Australia, the third secretary of the Soviet embassy who had asked for political asylum from those damned Americans after taking with him a great many secret documents."

I knew that the main Soviet spy network for southeast Asia was in Australia. I asked him, "Well, Petrov has remained in Australia and has been granted political asylum, but what has this to do with the two K. G. B. agents, and why are they here?"

He answered, "It is obvious that you do not understand Soviet policy yet. Look, they haven't been able to carry out a mission

properly, and that's why they are here. Moreover, they have fallen under the category of 'traitors to the motherland' and have been sentenced — if I am not mistaken — only to 25 years."

I asked again, "How is this possible?"

He said, "Look, I shall tell you what I have found out. In his work as third secretary of the Soviet embassy in Sydney, Australia, Petrov received all instructions for southeast Asia from Moscow. It appears that a nasty fellow from the C. I. A. got too nosy concerning Petrov's affairs.

"When the K. G. B. found out about Petrov's C. I. A. connection, he was given a last-minute warning by the C. I. A. For the sake of a secure future, Petrov crammed his briefcase with whatever secret documents he could get his hands on. And he knew where to find them! This too-short period of time did not allow him to take his wife along. She was forced by a few K. G. B. agents onto a plane bound for Moscow, where she was to answer for the deeds of her husband. To reach her destination safely, she was given two 'comrades' as companions for the entire trip.

"But the Americans — to whom Petrov had given plenty of secret documents — intervened, and the plane was forced to land at an airport which happened to be the last in Australia. Here Petrov's wife was asked if she wanted to talk to her husband over the phone, before leaving Australian territory. One of her companions answered in her place, 'Mrs. Petrov is going back to the motherland and does not want to talk to traitors!'

"By this time the airplane had been surrounded by the Australian police, and a few of their officers were watching every move of Mrs. Petrov and her companions. Two officers moved to her side, and, after she told them that she did not want to talk to her husband — this was said at the insistence of one of her companions — the two officers asked her to say at least farewell to her husband.

"Only after taking a few more steps, did Mrs. Petrov realize that she actually was in the custody of the Australian police and that no harm could come to her. Therefore, she told the two officers that she did not want to return to the Soviet Union and that she wanted to be with her husband.

"Realizing that they had made a mistake and had been tricked, the K. G. B. men attempted to turn her back by force, one of them trying to produce his revolver. Of course, every move they made was being watched, and they were disarmed

immediately.

"According to their own story, they were also given a few punches for the sake of Australian-Soviet friendship. Then they were ushered into the airplane and allowed to continue their trip to Moscow while Mrs. Petrov was being returned to her husband.

"Back in Moscow the two gave their detailed report. Unfortunately for them, Moscow already knew what had happened in Australia — to their utter disbelief and astonishment. The Western press had described the incident in abundant detail — a fact for which the two had to pay so dearly. You see, this is how things stand with us: Everything is planned! Someone had to be the scapegoat," concluded my friend, whispering in my ear.

VASILI ANDREEVICH, OR THE FORMER K. G. B. AGENT

There are many similar cases. The examples run in the thousands, especially when the Russian shows his true Russian nature, i. e., he knows that he is not guilty, but in spite of this he is charged with treason to the motherland. And for what reason?

Soviet Colonel Vasili Andreevich K. told us his own story as a scapegoat with a 25-year sentence for treason to the motherland and for spying. Perhaps the British Intelligence Service knows his case better and in more detail than I do.

Vasili Andreevich, one of the old guard of K. G. B. agents, member of the Communist Party since around 1923, had taken part in all the great operations of the K. G. B. and, lately, he had been the director of a big spy school specializing in England. The school was located somewhere near Leningrad. Towards the end of 1947, he was called by the headquarters of Soviet intelligence and counterintelligence, where they reproached him for not fulfilling the tasks set up by the Soviet plan.

What had actually happened? In his capacity as head of the school, Vasili Andreevich used to send his specially trained agents to England, with special missions, and through various channels. For reasons unknown, all the Soviet spies sent to England lately had begun to disappear without a trace, after they had reached their destination. Taking into account the unpleasant reality of these cases — as had been pointed out — the headquarters of Soviet intelligence and counterintelligence began to have

dismal thoughts. The master cared about his lost servants as the shepherd cared about his lost sheep. To get to the point, Vasili received the mission of going to England and finding out what was going on there. He had been known as an old party officer, loyal to the party and the Soviet system, a man the Soviets could count on without any doubt.

Before the war and even during it, Vasili had carried out several missions in England. He knew England and her customs extremely well. So his mission could be kept in the strictest secrecy, Vasili did not reveal it even to his wife, a teacher in Leningrad. More than that, in order to give his wife an acceptable explanation, he told her that — according to the advice of his physician — he had to take a rest because of overwork and that, consequently, he would leave for two weeks for a health resort in the Crimea, near the famous spa and climatic resort of Sochi.

Accompanied by his wife to the railway station, he parted from her like any man who goes on vacation alone. He was dressed in his military uniform. In fact, he went to Moscow, from where — changed into civilian clothes — he took the train to Riga, that is towards the Baltic Sea and not Sochi, on the Black Sea.

After reaching Riga, he went aboard a ship, changing ships several times. Finally, one afternoon, on board a Swedish ship, he arrived in London. Both the Thames and the London Tower revived in him memories of his youth when he had visited here. But there was no time for nostalgia. This time he had come with a special and extremely important mission.

After the routine check at customs, he sent his luggage to a second-rate hotel since here he was not a Soviet colonel any more but — as shown in his passport and papers — a Swedish worker.

Knowing the way from the harbor to the city, he traveled on foot to have time to refresh his plans in his memory. The road was known to him. He had walked on it many times in the London fog. Right now there was a pleasant sunset — something very rare in London.

As he was walking absorbed in his thoughts, after reaching a point only a few hundred meters from the harbor, he took the boulevard which led to the heart of the city. Suddenly an elegant car stopped near him and two gentlemen — English from cap to toe — got out and, very politely, asked him to accompany them and invited him into the car. He protested, but, after the two showed him their ID cards, he accepted the invitation

so as not to arouse suspicion since his Swedish papers were in order.

One of the Englishmen addressed him directly as "colonel" and welcomed him to London. He again protested, pretending that he did not understand the meaning of their form of address and their remarks. The two Englishmen ceased any further comments. He was taken to a villa in one of the northern districts of London, where he was told that he could rest and think about himself. On the upper floor of the villa there were several rooms including a rather large sitting room with a rich library, filled with books in all the languages of the earth.

The people who would attend him and serve him anything he needed were introduced to him: a lady cook, a valet and a gardener. It was interesting to notice that there was no guard to be seen. Among other directions, he was told that he could move freely all over the upper level but was forbidden to climb down to the first level or into the back or front yards. He was also told — at first he did not believe it — that all windows and doors leading outside had been secured with the most modern security systems — the latest technological breakthroughs, i. e., photoelectric cells and other similar things.

To show him that they meant business, they gave him a demonstration on the spot. In front of the window just opened by him, an iron gate came down very quickly and silently. Very kind and polite, his keepers left him alone to think about the new situation he found himself in.

After three days — during which time he did not see anybody else except the gardener and the valet, who brought him his meals — his captors returned. He was taken into a car and driven for two hours along different streets in London. Once they reached their destination, he was led to a large office where there were several persons, the majority of them wearing sunglasses.

After they welcomed him and invited him to sit down, they went directly to the point, which was something he had not expected. As a K. G. B. officer who knew the Soviet methods of questioning in detail, he could not understand why he was not being questioned in the proper manner (which for him meant Soviet-style questioning).

He was told that it was useless to deny who he was because they knew him very well and, moreover, they knew the mission he had to carry out. He categorically denied everything. Then one of those present — bent upon convincing him — gave him

a few pictures in which he could see himself at the railway station in Leningrad, dressed in his colonel's uniform, accompanied by his wife; in Moscow, dressed as a civilian; in Riga, on board the ship he had taken; then in London, at the moment of his arrival. After these overwhelming proofs, he was shown a new bundle of pictures, most of them taken on the premises of the spy school he directed in the Soviet Union.

During the ensuing discussions with these kind and refined gentlemen — who smelt by far like British Intelligence Service — one of the gentlemen offered to give him the chance (of course, if he wanted to take it) to talk to his former subordinates and friends sent to England with special missions, the people for whom he actually had traveled here. At the same time they told him that — if he wished — he could remain in England or in any other Western country without any obligation or pledge in return. In case he decided against it, he would have to leave England as soon as possible.

One of the Englishmen told him, "Colonel, we do not intend to influence you, but we are making you the offer. The best thing to do is to remain here in the West and not to go back to the Soviet Union. If you still desire to go back, you must know that you will be arrested and sentenced to 25 years for 'betraying the motherland' and for 'spying' and then taken far away to one of the thousands of concentration camps in the Soviet Union."

"I, like a stupid ass" — these were the words of Vasili Andreevich — "did not believe a word. My honesty and awareness that I wasn't guilty of any wrongdoing made me turn them down categorically only to find myself, in a few days, put onto a Soviet ship leaving for Leningrad. I parted from the English without being compelled by them to make any statement or sign any document.

"Arrived in the city of Leningrad, I went immediately to my superior to give him my report which I had written on board ship. To my astonishment, my superior didn't even bother to shake my outstretched hand or to say, 'Welcome back home, Vasili Andreevich!' After he superficially looked over my report — while I was standing in front of him — he said to me, laughing, 'Who do you think is going to believe your cock-and-bull stories, traitor?' The next moment I was approached from behind by two officers who had entered the door at my chief's call. Only then did he tell me that I was being placed under arrest. All my endeavors to prove that I was not guilty remained fruitless. I was questioned

day and night. Those who questioned me kept changing all the time. My former subordinates and friends became my enemies. After a while they asked me to sign a confession to the charges which specified my crimes: 'high treason' and 'espionage,' as per articles 55/1-A and 58/1-6. My trial lasted less than one hour. I still did not lose hope. I knew I was innocent, I was a Soviet patriot, and I was loyal to the Communist Party. But the reading of the sentence — 25 years in prison — made all my hopes collapse like a castle of cards.

"Yes, sir, all over the place, they say that the Soviet Secret Service is one of the best intelligence services in the world. However, today, I, Vasili Andreevich K., former colonel of the K. G. B., can tell you that the entire Soviet intelligence service, together with the questioning bodies and the juridical apparatus, is made only of upstarts and cowards and is based only on treachery and lies.

"During all of Soviet history — from the 1917 Revolution to the present time — the most dedicated Communist Party people have had to pay for their dedication in treachery and intrigue. Flattery, lies and terror rule all over the Soviet Union, and this makes most of the Russians — from children to old people — curse their own fate. Only today do they realize that there are no differences between Tsarist Russia and the Soviet state. The Tsar was the butcher of yesterday, and the present satrap is the butcher of today!

"You English gentlemen, if you by chance come across another case such as mine, please keep insisting with your advice because, if you don't, the person in question will have the same fate as mine!"

This is how a dedicated communist (who had analyzed the West in all its aspects — good and bad — but who had never looked into his own back yard) ended up.

AN EXPERIMENT IN DARWIN'S THEORY

Very often I ask myself why fate is so cruel to some people. Man and monkey imitate one another in certain circumstances. This reciprocity has become a contagious disease in our century. Just look at the Soviets. They behave like the monkey: When they see something to their liking, they embrace it; when they see something they don't like, they say "the hell with it!"

Thus the Soviets embraced Darwin, who had launched the

theory that man is related to the ape. The Soviets have adopted Darwin's theory but they don't fully rely upon what they have adopted. They have tried to prove what they consider a valid complement to Darwin's theory — the idea that man has descended from the apes or monkeys. They keep incessantly searching for man's origin, hoping that tomorrow perhaps a Soviet scientist — Ivanov, Petrov or Orlov — will discover something and then Darwin will be retired like other foreigners before him. To prove my point, I shall recall a very important event which happened on one of the frozen plains of the North.

The death camp of Holodilnik, in Vorkuta, was attached to Death Camp 9-10 with special regimen. For the construction of the miners' school building in Vorkuta — which was under way not far from this camp — new help was brought in for the plumbing work required for central heating, water and sewers. Not all the newcomers were craftsmen. In one of these new groups, among other detainees, there were two youngsters who had not reached the age of 25. They had an athletic appearance and always kept themselves aloof from the others and never commented on the news of the day. Wherever they went, they went together.

The work-brigade chief was a Russian prisoner who had a long record in other camps, too. He was one of the few who had survived the hard times before, during, and especially immediately after the war.

One day, seized by a fit of sheepish melancholy, he tried to forget about the past by emptying the contents of a bottle of vodka. He and I talked several times, on different subjects. Even now after so many years, I can not understand how this man could have been sent to prison for poltical activity! Perhaps he had done something for somebody — I am sure not out of his own initiative.

After he gave me the bottle to take a drink, he said to me, wiping the sweat from around his eyes, "Listen to me, Ferry. I have just a little time left before my release. But since I don't have anybody, I shall remain here, in Vorkuta. Here I shall be able to earn my bread easier, in my craft." While he was telling me his plans for the future, the two youngsters I mentioned before passed by us. Suddenly he started, grasped my hand, and, looking at those two who were walking away, said, "Do you know who they are? And especially why they are here?" He roared with laughter, striking his hip with his hand.

"These are scientists. They wanted to prove to the entire

world that there is no God, that man comes from the ape. Unfortunately for them, they could not keep their mouths shut!"

What had actually happened? One of the scientific institutes in the Soviet Union had been given the enviable assignment — by direct order from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union — to prove to the whole world that in reality man comes from the ape and that there is no God.

Following this high party order, the Soviet institute recruited several human beings — males and females -- specially selected for the coming experiments. The main laboratory was situated somewhere on the northeastern side of Moscow. There, at that laboratory, the Soviet scientists started to crossbreed human males with females belonging to various ape or monkey species and vice-versa. This was done both by sexual intercourse and by artificial insemination and other experiments one can not precisely describe. The two youngsters I saw passing by were two of those laboratory males.

How did it happen that the two were sent here to the North Pole? Was it also some kind of experiment?

As mentioned before, the Soviet institute used to recruit — of course, with their consent — human males and females for its experiments, warning them not to tell anyone about this.

One day, in the fall of 1952, the two youngsters were given permission to go to Moscow for a few days, to take care of some personal matters. Undoubtedly, their pockets full of money plus the solitude to which they had been subjected in the limited circle of friends at the institute made them — as it would have made any other young men of their age -- forget certain things from their special private life.

It so happened that, together with other youngsters — former fellow students in high school or university — they had a little party in the house of one of them. There was much drinking and talk, and everybody told the story of his life and adventures. Since, under such circumstances, it is often the alcohol which talks instead of the person and it bids the tongue to talk about anything, contradictory arguments get started. They came to talk about man, where he comes from; the majority of the students present supported the Soviet misconception of Darwin's theory, namely that man comes from ape or monkey. If so, then one of the thousands of the existing races of monkeys must be man's ancestor. Therefore, a crossbreed between a man and such a monkey could prove the truth of this version of the theory. Unable to stand this kind of subject matter, the two

youngsters — who were personally involved in such an experiment and were aware of some of the results — forgot all about their signed commitment to the Soviet authorities, i. e., about the danger of leaking such a state secret, and started to talk. Thus they told the limited circle of friends about their holy mission for science and for mankind, under the auspices of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Of course, they were assailed from all sides and were asked details about their own sexual intercourse and others' with monkeys, which they had witnessed, as well as about the results of those experiments.

Dawn had come a long time before, and they were not yet finished answering all the questions. Every moment, there was a new question which had to be debated in detail.

In a few days, after their return to the experimental institute, both youngsters were called to the office of the K. G. B. officer in charge of the security of the experimental institute and were informed that they had to be accompanied to Moscow — to clarify certain scientific matters -- by the two comrades unknown to them who were waiting in the office.

During the entire trip nobody uttered a word. Once in Moscow, they were taken directly to Lubyanka Prison, where the "scientific matters" mentioned before were clarified. The outcome was brief and heavy: The revealing of a state secret and betrayal of the motherland brought them 25 years in a death camp. And because they had been part of a special experimental group, the supreme leaders — to be on the safe side — thought to send them somewhere where they were sure that escape was impossible. Moreover, the Vorkuta death camps were among the few places where very few people survived.

Here, in the death camp of Holodilnik, they had enough time to think what friendship meant, and what the purpose was of the spider's web which enmeshed the entire population of the Soviet Union.

Their trust in friends was dearly paid for, and the two youngsters experienced the disappointment of thousands of comrades of different nationalities with whom they shared their suffering. Proletarians from all over the world met at Vorkuta!

UNCLE ZAHARIA

After the end of the Second World War, the female population outnumbered the male, especially in the Ukraine and the Baltic states. The shortage of males was felt also in other parts of the Soviet empire, especially in the concentration camps. As an example, let us take Uncle Zaharia, a Romanian from Bessarabia, a very funny man and good at all things. Originally coming from the banks of the Dniester, Uncle Zaharia had dealt in fish trading as a youngster. He used to buy fish in the city of Cetatea Alba and sell it in Hotin. Later he joined a gang of K. G. B. informers.

Since the great Soviet industrial centers demanded working hands, the Soviet government managed to pick holes in Zaharia's coat. He was charged with collaborating with the Romanians (he was, in fact, Romanian) — and subsequently sentenced to 20 years.

After several wanderings through prisons and concentration camps, he finally arrived at Vorkuta. By this time he was an old man — over 60 — though he kept himself in good shape. The medical commission blessed him with the position of barracks caretaker. From time to time, Zaharia had the opportunity to do some small business as he used to do when he was young. It so happened that one of the leaders of the camp work brigades came to live in Zaharia's barracks. Since Zaharia was the servant and the other man the master, the servant served the master promptly. Satisfied by Zaharia's services, the boss asked him one day, "Old man, can you do masonry work?"

"Of course I can," said Zaharia, since he was handy with everything.

"Look, I need approximately 10 masons and helpers for special masonry work."

"So what? Aren't there enough masons around? And even if there aren't, you can get more!"

"Well, you must know one thing, you old fox! All the masons we need must be over a certain age!"

"Where is the work supposed to be done, boss?" asked Zaharia, thinking that it might be a place where he could make a small profit.

"In the women's camp, old man!"

"For Heavens' sake! Do you think that's a problem? Why the secrecy? Let's have it: What is your price?" said Zaharia.

(I should point out here that for any job with possibilities of small or greater profit, the recipient had to be materially grateful.)

"No price for you. Though from time to time you'll have to do me a small favor, carrying letters from me to Lyuba, a girlfriend from old times, and bringing her answers back to me."

In a few days the work brigade was formed — mainly of men over 55 years of age. The brigade was taken to the women's camp every morning and brought back every night. In the women's camp, the masons had a marked zone surrounding their work site outside which they were not allowed to step. It is well known that usually women eat less than men. Thus, inside the women's barracks, one could find a piece of bread, whereas in the men's barracks this would have been a miracle.

The ingenious and businesslike character which Uncle Zaharia possessed made him quickly recognize the new situation which had come up and start some action. During his breaks he used to run to some of the barracks and ask the women caretakers if they had any difficult work to do since he was heartily ready to give them a hand, for instance, to carry boiled or cold water. Of course, for this endeavor Zaharia was always richly rewarded with dry bread crumbs which — thank God — were not in shortage in the women's barracks. Thus, in a few days, Zaharia had a monopoly on business in some of the women's barracks due to his hard work and his funny stories which he used to tell while running in between the two barrels of water. Moreover, after a while, Zaharia assigned himself the sole task of carrying water while his colleagues did his part of the masonry job — of course, with pay. Right now he was the boss. Every evening, upon departure, Zaharia used to take with him a bag full of bread crumbs which rendered him a profit in the men's camp. This business was becoming more and more prosperous from day to day.

One day, while returning from a barrack where he had carried the last supply of water for that night, he was accosted by two women detainees. One asked him, "Old man, are you good at masonry work?"

He answered, "Of course. I am a mason by profession!"

"Great! Could you come with us and take a look? Perhaps you could advise us. If you can and you have the time, perhaps you will do this job! Of course, you'll get something in return! We shall pay you in food, clothes and tobacco."

Zaharia was pleased. "Let's go, girls!" He said to himself, "What luck on my head to get tobacco, too!"

In the Soviet death camps, both women and men wear mostly the same kind of attire, especially in the Arctic regions: cotton-stuffed cap, padded coat and trousers. In other words, everything is stuffed with cotton, and if you look at three or more people from behind, you can not tell the women from the men.

Reaching a barrack, the two women and Zaharia climbed up an improvised ladder into the attic. Four other women followed them up immediately. They were introduced to Zaharia as the chief of the barrack, the work-brigade lady chief, and the last two as the women in charge of cleaning.

One of the women said, "Let's go there, uncle, towards the back of the attic where there is a chimney which leaks out smoke. We would like you to fix it for us. Of course, you'll not charge us too much, will you? But let us walk closer so you'll be able to take a better look."

After walking up to the back of the attic and seeing no cracks in the chimney, Zaharia turned around and asked, "Where is the trouble, girls?"

"Here, uncle! Look at us and you'll understand. Start making your choice because there is plenty!"

"My dear girls, I am an old man. It's been a long time since I have tasted the forbidden apple."

"Hurry up, uncle. We don't have much time!"

And before Zaharia could make up his mind, they stripped him to the skin, and after all imaginable and unimaginable caresses, the first lady went into action while Zaharia was being held down on his back from four corners by four women. Now since there were six women and their determination was growing stronger and the old man had worn out, they tied up his testicles at the base so as to make him usable to the last.

After taking turns raping him, the ladies took all his clothes — even his underwear and shirt — leaving him completely naked. Then they left, taking the ladder with them so he could not climb back down. Of course, they did not forget to warn him not to say a single word to anybody about what had happened or else . . .

In the evening, when departure time came, the men gathered at the gate of the camp to be counted. One man was missing at the count, and that man was Zaharia. Someone said, "Perhaps the ladies ate him up! Where could the old fox be?"

And everybody started to look for him in the camp. After a long while, one of Zaharia's co-workers heard a hissing sound while passing by a barrack. Upon looking up, he saw a hand

disappearing through the opening to the attic.

They found him, that is, they discovered him, but in what condition! All naked, as he had been born! Poor Uncle Zaharia! Until they found a ladder to get him down from the "camp paradise," the news spread all over the camp and people came from everywhere to see this "miracle."

"It drew crowds as if it were the miracle of Maglavit," Zaharia said later on.

After he was pitied and after they fetched him some clothes to dress, the new god of love, Cupid, personified by Zaharia, climbed down the ladder as if descending from Olympus.

There were crowds all over the place and everyone was merry. Some roared with laughter while others looked indignant and turned their heads away from the naked Cupid. Uncle Zaharia was, indeed, the hero of the day.

All immediate and subsequent searches failed to lead to the discovery of the identity of the six Amazons in spite of the fact that the K. G. B. paraded all the camp's women in front of Zaharia.

From that day on, no man — regardless of age — had permission to work in the women's camp. Zaharia became the subject of many jokes and made-up stories. His mercantile spirit was proved again this time because he retold the happening only if he was given something in return. All this happened in 1948. Here, in Death Camp 9-10, in the year or our Lord 1954, Zaharia said, after retelling us his experience, "What misfortune on the head of man when he desires, dreams but can not possess, and what greater misfortune on the same when he has plenty to possess but he lacks the power to do it!"

You who read this lines may find them funny or disgusting. Whatever your thoughts are, I should like to ask you not to condemn these women for their deeds, for the fact that they sinned. I shall give you only a few examples regarding the labors to which these modern female slaves of the first socialist state in the world were subjected to.

At the brick factory, the women had to take the bricks out of the hot giant kilns, at a temperature of 60 to 70 degrees Celsius, and stack them on a railway flatcar; then the same women had to push the railway car out of the overheated room outside into the minus-30-degree-Celsius cold. Thus from plus 70 degrees Celsius to minus 30 degrees Celsius, the woman guinea pig was experimented upon in different ways by the representatives of the Soviet "science." Only a few women could endure this

kind of treatment! If the work in the brick factory was hard, then the construction work at the railroad was even harder. An interesting fact is that in the last years the Soviet authorities ceased using men and stuck only to women prisoners because, after every railway job completed by men, trains used to derail after running over those tracks. On the contrary, railway work performed by women was safer, and derailments never occurred. The problem with women was of a different kind. The majority of them — working or having worked in railway construction — suffered from hernias due to the fact that they had to lift heavy materials. Therefore, for carrying a railway track 10 to 12 meters long, the prescribed number of women was 20 to 22. Now thinking of their state of mind, undernourished as they were, no one should wonder at the great number of work accidents, often resulting in death due to the women's incapacity to face this superhuman physical and spiritual strain. Well, if you didn't know, let me tell you that in the Soviet Union women have equal rights with men.

The only females who were more robust by nature and appearance were the Ukrainian women, who could very often work twice as hard as men.

Of course, the femininity, the tenderness of the eternal womanly attraction was gone. The woman had turned into a labor-worn body though she continued to dream about the love of a handsome, charming, devoted man.

"How many sighs, pillow embracings, turnings in bed and dreams," G. S. wrote to me in one of the letters describing the daily life in a women's barrack in Vorkuta.

Up to 1950, women worked in the Vorkuta mines due to the shortage of men. In other parts of the Soviet Union, in the thousands of death camps of this huge communist empire, women were still forced to work in mines. Therefore, we should not wonder that the rate of population growth in the Soviet Union is very low. First of all, millions of men — the majority in the prime of their lives and at the peak of their physical strength — were kept in concentration or death camps. I am not talking about thousands but about millions.

Second, the women, in their turn, were ill treated — both those in the death camps and those outside who were bereft of their husbands. Regarding their cultural level here, in the camps, the women represented the motley of nationalities all over the globe. From Stalin's sisters-in-law and Molotov's wife to the woman shepherd in the sub-Carpathian Ukraine, all

women in the Soviet Union moaned under the heel of the Kremlin satrap.

PYOTR YAKIR

The war had been over for a long time. The Soviet media however, kept refreshing the memories of those willing and unwilling to listen with "Victory Day," the day when the Nazi beast had been destroyed in its own lair. The public was always reminded that, in his final hours, Hitler married Eva Braun, who got the rights of a lawful wife in a masquerade ceremony.

Here is the way the Soviet newpapers used to write lest the Soviet people should forget: "What an idiot this leader of the Third Reich!" On every such occasion, the Soviet press also recalls the tragic end of Goebbels' innocent children. (Goebbels was Hitler's Propaganda Minister and one of those who served the Fuehrer until death. In his own words, he killed his children because he did not want them to fall into the hands of the Bolsheviks.)

"But who would have touched some innocent children, even if their father was a criminal?" said the Attorney General of the Soviet Union, R. A. Rudenko — chief Soviet prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials. How hypocritical is the heart of a pretending stepmother, and how sweet seems the honey extracted from a serpent's venom which these Red criminals display unsparingly in front of the world! This is indeed some insolence! These Red gentlemen claim that they do not have anything against the children or the relatives of those found guilty by the Soviets, regardless of who they are. "Children are innocent! Children can not be held responsible for their parents' deeds in the Soviet Union!"

This is a mere lie, and I shall prove it to you as I have done before.

During 1950, in one of the new shipments, in the death camp of Mine 7 at Vorkuta, someone by the name of Pyotr Yakir — a criminal by the way he behaved — arrived. He was the son of the Soviet General Yakir, put to death by Stalin and his henchmen in 1937. Pyotr Yakir had been arrested at the age of 14 only because he was the son of General Yakir, the traitor to the motherland.

Later on it was proved that a big mistake had been made. However, there was no remedy since the old general had been

executed. His son, too, could not be set free because he had seen and known too much. Anybody of this sort can not be released. Until the age of 14, Pyotr Yakir had a rather remarkable education which did not alter his character for the worse after he matured as a man. I met him personally in one of the small rooms of the club of the Mine 7 camp where he was posing for one of my compatriots, a painter by profession, Julius Stuermer, about whom I shall talk in due time. I could never imagine that this young boy — who had such an uneasy life — could still be full of hope that there would be another tomorrow for him, that his star was still shining high. After a while he was shipped to some other death camp, but for me he remained a child who paid for his parents' mistakes.

GENERAL ATMAN SIMIONOV AND HIS CHILDREN

About the same time, in Death Camp 1 for women, there was a young, beautiful girl — well educated, I should say very well educated for her age — by the name of Lena Simionov, the daughter of General Simionov, commander of the White Russian troops in Manchuria.

In 1945, with the entrance of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan, and after Japan's surrender following the dropping of the two atomic bombs, the Japanese and the White Russian troops — their allies — were taken prisoner by Soviet troops. Having no alternative left to save his men because all the exit routes had been blocked, Simionov — one of the outstanding figures of the Russian Exile — as a White Russian officer and leader, found it appropriate to die by committing suicide.

Another version of his death says that he had been charged with treason at an open trial in Moscow, in 1946, and sentenced to death by hanging. An eyewitness to this — who had actually watched the trial (which could have been a mere formality) — was the Japanese Captain Takeoka, a liaison officer between the Japanese Secret Service and the headquarters of General Simionov. Captain Takeoka had been kept for 18 months in the military prison of Le Fortovskaya in Moscow. This prison was built in the shape of the letter "K" in remembrance of Katherine (or Catherine) the Great, Empress of Russia. It was built by General Le Fort, a Frenchman in the service of the Empress, whose lover he was. Takeoka was locked up in cell 138, from where he was taken out as a witness at the trial of Simionov.

Two months before the trial started, Takeoka received better food and, on the eve of the trial, his clothes were taken to the cleaner. Every day during the trial, he had a haircut and a shave. During the same period, in the same cell as Takeoka, there was the German citizen Fritz Cloos, the head of the German Romanian workers whom I have already mentioned and about whom I shall speak again.

Among other outstanding people locked up in the prison was the last emperor of China, Suen Tung (who later called himself Pu Yi). Sentenced by the Soviets to 25 years under the charge of spying for the Japanese, Suen Tung was later handed over to Mao Tse-Tung, on whose orders he was reeducated and subsequently set free in 1959, in Beijing. He was ready to take any offer and accept any blame from the Chinese government. Later he worked at the Botanical Garden in Beijing and wrote a book, but in it there was nothing about the places where he had been detained or the way he had been treated. What a pity the Emperor did not say a word about the Soviets! It would have been interesting to find out His Majesty's opinion!

In his book, the Emperor described his life and how well he was reeducated by Mao's people. The book was published in 1964, and the Emperor died in 1967 — too soon, perhaps sooner than he thought, without leaving us a single word about his Soviet experience. Anyway, this is how sometimes history is written, that is, by keeping silent. And the liberal press in the West did not write a single line about him!

But let us go back to General Simionov. He had two children: Lena, who was also his secretary and at that time was 19 years old; and a son, 16 years old, who had an infirmity in one of his legs as a result of paralysis in his early childhood. Both these children took the road to suffering under the "protective" wing of Uncle Joe in the Kremlin. Together with thousands of other White Russians, they began their march — some say it was worse that the Bataan death march of the American prisoners taken by the Japanese in the Philippines — from Manchuria to the Soviet Union.

Since this calvary lasted several months, a great many of the prisoners died on the road, unable to stand the tribulations and treatment imposed. Along this road, Lena lost her younger brother, who could not endure the deadly march due to his infirmity. Unable to keep pace with the convoy, he was shot in the back of the head by a Soviet soldier, like many others in his situation. Lena was not even allowed to run to him and

see him dead.

After years of misery in different Soviet death camps, Lena was taken to the camp with special regimen in Vorkuta. With dignity she kept confronting the political officers who tried to take advantage of her. What a strange judicial system where questioning continues after so many years of imprisonment!

She was questioned at night because during the day she had to go to work. And if she complained about headaches or other illnesses, the Soviet officers laughed at her, calling her crazy.

One of her intimate girl friends, V. B. — nicknamed by the Soviets "Ash Soul" — wrote to me about what was happening there. To demonstrate that she was indeed insane, the Soviets confined her in the Sangorodok Death Camp hospital. Here the questioning went on. Moreover, it became rougher.

One morning, after returning from the questioning, she confessed to the girl who was sleeping in the same bed with her (this girl was the sister of a Ukrainian nicknamed Taras Bulba, who was in Camp 7) that the political officer had tried to abuse her sexually. The same evening she was recalled for questioning and never returned.

The next morning she was found hanging from the barbed wire of the camp as if she had attempted escape. The Soviet commission found that "Lena Simionov had tried to escape and had been shot only after the guard fired three warning shots in the air." These were the findings of the Soviet commission.

However, the findings of the detainee-physicians were altogether different. Lena Simionov had been shot at point-blank range, which could be seen by the burnt hair on the back of her head. The detainee-physicians also established that, from the place where the guard stood, it would have been impossible to shoot Lena in the back.

Another thing which the same physicians found out was that Lena could not have tried to escape since she was dressed in her hospital clothes and had a hospital gown on at the time of her death. Moreover, the night she was shot, the polar storm was still raging (it had begun to blow in the evening) and it had not ended yet during the following day. Lena's footwear was a pair of slippers. Besides, the women in charge of cleaning the nearby barracks heard only one single shot and not five (as the Soviet commission had found) or two (she actually had two bullet holes in the back of her head).

Consequently, it was supposed that Lena had been shot in the office of the political officer.

I can not help thinking that all this was done to her because she was the daughter of the White Russian General Simionov.

SANDOR NAGY — "SANY"

The end of 1944. Soviet troops, together with Romanian troops, have already begun fighting on Hungarian territory. As Budapest, the capital, is preparing for defense, a great part of the population has been evacuated or is still in the process of being evacuated from the city. Among the thousands of families to be evacuated, there is the Nagy family. The father is somewhere on the front; the mother and their son, Sandor, 10 years old, go to the grandparents. Sandor — or Sany — has been a member, since the age of 7, of the children's soccer team, Ferenczvaros.

At the end of the war, Budapest is almost completely destroyed, so they decide to stay with the grandparents for a longer time. To make himself useful, Sany takes the cow by the rope every day, and, together with the children of the village and their cows, goes to the nearby pasture. There he does his soccer practice (which he has learned in the city) to stay in shape. (This is what he bragged about in front of these peasant children, he, the big player from the capital.) After each practice he plays a real match with the other children.

As it is around many pastures in this world, here too, at one end of the grazing area there is a cluster of bushes. Very often, among the briers of the cluster they play war games. Guns (dropped during the fighting) are all over the place, not yet having been picked up.

One day Sany finds a pistol. Of course, due to the changes of weather, it has long since become rusty. Sany makes up his mind to take the pistol home — it seems to have been the revolver of an officer. So his mind has been made up, and without being noticed by his friends (who could turn him in because of envy), Sany puts the pistol into the belt of his short trousers and — as it is already evening — takes the cow by the rope, and he and the other children take the road home.

There are no Soviet troops in the village but — to Sany's bad luck — a Red Army patrol is standing at the entrance into the village searching people and vehicles leaving or entering the hamlet.

When the herd of cattle, accompanied by the children, is on

the point of entering the village, the Soviet soldiers give them free passage without any search. Some soldiers crack a few jokes and some pat the children on their heads, perhaps thinking that somewhere, in their own villages in Russia their own children are returning from the pastures with the cows.

By mere chance, an older soldier grasps Sany by the shoulder and asks him: "How old are you, kid?"

Feeling somehow guilty, Sany twists his body and tries to walk away. His shirt opens, and another soldier — who is on the other side of the road — notices that the child is carrying a gun.

What follows happens so quickly that words can not describe it. The "bandit" has been caught, and neither the Soviet soldiers nor the interrogator — later on — are willing to believe that this rusted pistol has been found by chance by Sany who — like any child of his age — wants to play with it.

He is sentenced to 20 years and, at the age of 11, is thrown, together with other prisoners — mostly Hungarians — into the cell reserved for deportees. To keep up appearances, before being loaded into the railway cars, all detainees are taken in front of a medical commission to be given a medical visa showing that their health condition allows them to be deported. The head of the medical commission happens to be a woman: Major Lieutenant of the Soviet Red Cross Olimpiada Sergeevna Grishchina.

When Sany appears in front of the medical commission — small and skinny, with tears in his eyes — the head of the commission refuses to consent to his deportation after finding out the reason and especially the sentence that has just been given to the little boy. But the K. G. B. officer in charge of the shipment of detainees grabs Sany by the shoulders and pushes him into the railway car without any medical visa. Olimpiada Grishchina wipes two tears off her cheeks.

Five years passed. Sandor Nagy was now 16 years old and about 1.65 meters (5 feet, 6 inches) tall. He worked in several places in the death camps, but because he was a child, his main job was that of errand boy.

The polar climate at Vorkuta turned the fragile boy into a youngster with lungs of steel. He survived the darkest periods of 1947 and 1948 when many detainees died due to undernourishment and typhoid fever. The frosts of Vorkuta strengthened this little Hungarian.

One day, it was announced that the camp would be assigned a new head physician, a woman. In any case she could not be worse than the drunkard whom she was going to replace.

In a few days, all detainees had to go for a check-up in front of the medical commission in the presence of the new head physician. When Sandor Nagy approached the table behind which the commission was seated, he recognized in the new head physician — who now had the rank of captain — the same one who had intervened on his behalf, years back, in Hungary, to prevent his deportation. The surprise was even greater as she, too, recognized him. This time, too, she could not hold back her tears.

Another year passed. The lack of working hands began to be felt at Vorkuta. The medical commission — under the direct supervision of the political officer of the K. G. B. — began to "make healthy" all the sick and invalids, listing them as "fit for work." Many of those who worked in construction or on the surface were assigned to the miners' brigades which worked underground. On personal orders from the K. G. B. officer, Sany was assigned to work in one of these brigades. He categorically refused to work underground because to work in the mine was tantamount to fighting in the first line of the battle front: One knows when he leaves but never knows when he will come back. The multiple accidents which happened almost daily made Sany refuse the honor of becoming a Soviet miner. In spite of all threats of the K. G. B. officer, he stood firm on his decision, arguing — and with good reason — that he had been taken prisoner when 11 years old, that is, as a child, and that it wasn't right for him to die in the mines.

Since the pressure from the political officer increased each day and since the chief of the work brigade could not cover for Sany every day, he advised him at least to get out of the lodging zone of the camp into the work zone of Mine 7.

During the short periods of warmer weather, they used to play soccer in the death camps. There were 4 soccer teams: Shakhteor I and II; and Stroikontor I and II. Sany played for Stroikontor I, which had been the champion in the last few years. Due to the fact that Sany was known through his sporting activity and especially due to his good technique in soccer, he was liked by everybody in the camp.

Upon the promise to be included in the next semimonthly labor transfer from the mine brigades to the brigades performing work on the surface, Sany agreed to be included in the mine brigade.

It so happened that that day at the camp's gate, the officer

on duty was the K. G. B. officer who had been trying to force him to work in the mine. When Sany reached the entrance to the mine, he did not go down with his work brigade but remained on the ground wandering through different work sections and talking to close friends. Reaching the section of the circular saws where they made reinforcement beams for the support of the mine galleries, he began to talk to some Hungarian friends.

The K. G. B. officer, who was just making his rounds, found out from one of his informers that Sany had not gone down

The Stroikontor I soccer team of Death Camp 11 in Iavas. Sandor Nagy is third from the right; the author is fourth from the left
Iavas, 1955

into the mine. The officer went to the chief of the mine (a Russian political prisoner) and ordered everybody into the work hall. As soon as everybody was in, the officer kept looking around until he spotted Sany. He walked up to him and said, "Why didn't you go down into the mine?"

Sany said, "I shall never ever go down into the mine, Comrade Officer. I have told you this before, and I am telling it to you now!"

The officer had a fit of rage. Apparently, he did not like being

confronted publicly by this detainee. He began to pour out all the vocabulary gathered from Soviet culture and science under the guidance of their teachers — Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. After listening to this preaching from the beginning to the end, Sany could not control himself any more. He broke down and started to cry. In between sobs, he told the officer his story and the reason for his arrest and deportation. But the officer disregarded what Sany was telling him and said, "Go down into the mine. If not, I shall put you on report for refusing to work and lock you up!"

Upon hearing this, Sany elbowed his way through the workers who had just cut a reinforcement beam with the circular saw and were putting it into the railway car. The saw was still turning. Sany took another step, nearing the saw's table. He looked at the swiftly turning iron teeth; then he looked loathingly — it was more disgust than loathing — at the officer and stretched out his hand, putting it right into the teeth of the saw, which cut off three fingers.

Up to this moment he had been crying. Right now he did not utter a sound or blink his eyes. Then, turning to the officer, he said, "Now, *you* can go and work in the mine, Comrade Officer, because I am through with working. From this day on, I am an invalid, and if you don't like it or if you are not satisfied, try and do what I've just done!"

The cut tips of the three fingers fell into the sawdust on the floor, red with the blood of this innocent kid, leaving him a perpetual remembrance of the Soviet death camps.

Well, children like Sandor Nagy — political prisoners since they had been 10 years old and with sentences up to 25 years — were many in the Auschwitzes of the East. Regrettably, the Western media is not very much inclined to talk or write about them.

THE ROMANIAN GENERAL AVRAMESCU AND HIS FAMILY

Here is the case of a superior officer, the Romanian General Gheorghe Avramescu, former commander of the Crimea during the period of the Romanian administration of this peninsula.

General Avramescu was a very capable man. Of course, he saw things from a military point of view, but at the same time he was driven by an immense desire to reorganize these territories destroyed by the passage of war. Always helped by his wife,

General Avramescu founded all over the Crimea, kindergartens, schools, houses for the elderly, hospitals, and pension funds for men and women — even for the wounded from the Soviet army who had fought against him. In other words, acts of charity such as the Soviets had not seen from forefathers to sons.

Avramescu was the man who kindled new hopes in the hearts of the Crimean Tartars. The news about his behavior reached

The Romanian General Gheorghe Avramescu (second from the left) makes an inspection. The Crimea, 1942

the ears of Moscow. Two Soviet partisans were given the mission of seeking Avramescu out and giving him two decorations from the Soviet government expressing thanks for his work as governor of the Crimea. The general accepted the decorations, but this matter was not made public. It remained a secret. However, German intelligence found out about it, and Hitler asked General Antonescu, the Romanian leader, to demote Avramescu.

In August, 1944, after Romania signed the armistice with the

Allied forces, General Avramescu was still in the army benefitting from all his military honors and rights. Moreover, he was offered a position — at Moscow's inspiration — in the new Romanian government as Minister of War. After several consultations with his more intimate friends, Avramescu rejected the proposition and went to the front in Transylvania, Hungary and then in Czechoslovakia.

On March 3, 1945, at Romanian army headquarters, commanded by General Avramescu, a few jeeps of the Soviet army

From left to right: General Antonescu, Fieldmarshal von Mannstein, unidentified man, General Avramescu. Sochi, 1942

arrived. In them were a few Soviet officers led by a Soviet general. After getting out of the jeeps, the Soviet officers, led by the general, went directly into Avramescu's office without asking to be received. (Apparently they had studied the set-up of the rooms in the building in detail.)

At that moment, in Avramescu's office, there were several Romanian officers — among them the Russian-language interpreter, Captain Sergiu Glavcea (stepson of General Petrovicescu,

former Minister of the Interior in the short-lived Romanian Legionnaire government).

When the door opened and the Soviet general and his gang entered the room, General Avramescu was listening to the reports of the commanders of his military units, assisted by his chief of staff, Romanian General Dragomir. He was greatly surprised to see the impertinence of the Russians in entering unannounced. Pretending not to notice this, he turned his head towards his interpreter and said, "Captain Glavcea, ask the Soviet general how we can help him!"

"Yes, sir," said the captain.

While the interpreter was doing as ordered, a barrel-shaped Soviet colonel — whose staves were on the point of splitting — walked up to the interpreter and asked him between two answers, "Is your last name Glavcea, and do you have the rank of captain?"

"Yes," Glavcea replied.

The Soviet colonel — who was holding a list in his hand — pointed to a name on the list and said with a sour grin, "Comrade Captain, you will come with us!"

Meanwhile another interpreter — this time from the Soviet army — began to interpret the conversation between the Romanians and the Soviet generals.

General Avramescu released his subordinate field commanders, who left the room. The only people in the room now were Avramescu, General Dragomir, and the Soviets. Captain Glavcea, too, had left in the jeep accompanied by the two Soviet officers and passed by the Romanian sentry, who gave them the salute.

After a short while, both Romanian generals, Avramescu and Dragomir, accompanied by the Soviet military gang, left the headquarters of the Romanian army without having the chance to talk to their subordinate officers, who had no idea that their supreme commander was under arrest.

From that moment on, Avramescu, Dragomir, and Glavcea were under arrest in the Soviet jeeps on the way to Budapest. Each of the three Romanians was in a different convoy of jeeps and trucks. After an extended stopover in Budapest, the convoy including the jeep with Captain Glavcea left the Hungarian capital, which was a shambles after the last battles. Only a few kilometers along their way towards the Hungarian city of Debrecen, they came across a seemingly bombed convoy of Soviet jeeps and trucks, many of them still burning. What had happened?

According to the Soviet version, a few German fighter planes had spotted that particular convoy and attacked it. This

unexpected attack had surprised many Soviet military in the jeeps and trucks who did not have a chance to abandon them. The dead and the wounded were lying all over the place. Of those who escaped, some were trying to save what could be saved while others were attending to the wounded.

The convoy in which Glavcea was riding made its way through this wreck and passed by a group of jeeps which were still burning and around which a few Soviet officers moved like busy bees. One of these officers was recognized by Glavcea's Soviet escort, who asked him, "What happened, Comrade Colonel?"

"The Nazis attacked us," answered the colonel, recognizing his former colleague.

"Do you have heavy losses?" asked the colleague.

The Soviet colonel answered, "Not too many! But we have some unpleasant news. Yes, I had General Avramescu with me, and when the Nazis attacked, he — being in the back of the jeep — could not get out and was mortally hit. No big damage, but we had to work hard to clean up the pool of blood." While saying this, the Soviet colonel was puffing nervously on his cigarette and looking at the back of the jeep.

The colonel's colleague looked at the wrecked jeep, too, and in the back seat he could see the dead body of a Romanian officer in between two other bodies, apparently Soviets. The Romanian officer could be recognized only by the military cap. He could not recognize the men from the distance since it was twilight. Pointing at the body of the Romanian officer, he asked, "Which one is it? One of those?"

The Soviet colonel did not answer but blinked his eyes and told his driver, "Get moving!"

In this way General Avramescu ended his military career, killed — according to the Soviets — by Nazi bullets while in Soviet custody.

After a few brief stopovers, Captain Glavcea was taken by plane directly to Moscow and locked up in the Lubyanka Prison. After months of detention, his turn to be questioned came. The Soviets stuck to the first priority rule, which meant that the highest military rank was to be questioned first since at that time many "personalities" began to arrive. The interrogators of the Lubyanka Prison — under the magic wand of the K. G. B. led by Beria and Abakhumov — got to them.

From the first days, the K. G. B. interrogator believed that Glavcea had had nothing to do with General Avramescu's death, or, in other words, he did not know how the Nazis had managed

to spot General Avramescu in a Soviet jeep and kill him by dropping bombs from airplanes.

Glavcea's answers had weight when confronted with the Soviet charges. Why, then, did the Soviets arrest him — an innocent man — and keep him for months without questioning him and, all of a sudden, find out that he had not been involved in any Nazi plot?

Could anything be straightened out? The war had ended a long time before. What did Glavcea really know? Where had he been kept by the Soviets all this time? Perhaps they took him for a hunting trip, to hunt polar bears! Who could believe that? Once in the hands of the K. G. B. — even though innocent — one was wary of hearing too much or too little. However, the individual must be sentenced with legal justification because — the Soviets say — the K. G. B. defends the Soviet system only by legal means, by papers and documents. Thus the astonished Captain Glavcea received an eight-year sentence and was shipped northward to the death camps of Vorkuta. An eight-year policy covered by the K. G. B. "insurance agency." Eight years of torment in the Arctic death camps! For what? This is how justice is done in the Soviet system!

The ID card of Captain Glavcea showing that he can never leave the U. S. S. R. though released from the death camps. Vorkuta, March 3, 1953

During the questioning, Glavcea realized that there had been no misunderstanding, but he made up his mind not to draw the attention of the interrogators to this fact since it was useless. The Soviets would not let him go, anyway!

But what was the misunderstanding? At that time, there were two captains by the last name of Glavcea — two brothers, Bob and Sergiu — working at General Avramescu' army headquarters.

The Soviet colonel who arrested Sergiu Glavcea knew only two things: that he was a captain and that he spoke Russian. The truth was that both brothers had the rank of captain, both spoke Russian, but one had the first name of Bob and the other — Sergiu. (About them and their fate I shall talk at the right time. Meanwhile, let us see what happened farther on.)

Immediately after Avramescu's death, his family was arrested. His wife was sentenced to 25 years' hard labor and shipped to one of the thousands of death camps of the great communist empire. Avramescu's daughter, Felicia Avramescu Sturza, committed suicide — according to the Soviet official version — on March 6, 1945, that is, three days after her arrest.

General Gheorghe Avramescu and his daughter

What is the truth? The fighting for Budapest was over on February 13, 1945, and the Germans formed a new front in the region of Lake Balaton in Hungary, along the Austrian border and in Czechoslovakia. It is well known that during the period of February to March, 1945, in the last stage of the war, the Luftwaffe was almost nonexistent. The lack of fuel proved to be a catastrophe. The oil output for aviation, in February, 1945, was one thousand tons, 163,000 tons less than in February, 1944. No comment about that.

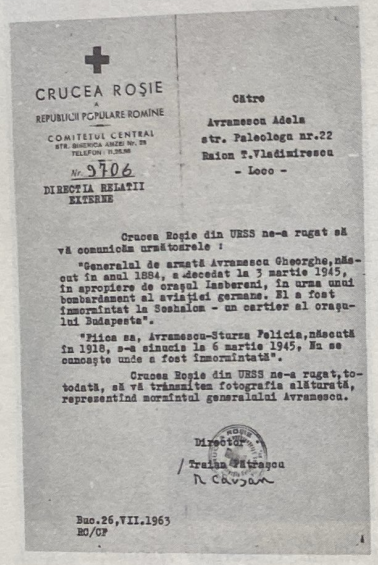
If the Luftwaffe was still active, it was in very rare circumstances and only for reconnaissance flights or direct attacks on the front line and not hundreds of kilometers behind enemy lines, which was where Avramescu was killed. The Luftwaffe could not cope with the situation any longer.

Consequently, a German air attack south of Budapest, on March 3, 1945 (when Avramescu was killed), was a sheer impossibility, and what Glavcea saw was a setup made to look

like the aftermath of an air-force attack. This Soviet fabrication was meant to deceive Glavcea and to use him as an official Romanian eyewitness — if the situation had required it — regarding the cause of Avramescu's death. Another performance staged in the open air under the direction of the K. G. B.!

The Soviet Marshal Rodion Malinovsky, supreme commander of the second Ukrainian front, was personally responsible for the assassination of Avramescu because it was Malinovsky who gave the order for the arrest of Avramescu and his family.

Malinovsky was also responsible for the assassination of Avramescu's daughter, Felicia Avramescu Sturza. In a letter sent to the Romanian (communist) Red Cross, the Soviet Red Cross reported the location of General Avramescu's grave. The Romanian (communist) Red Cross then issued an "official" document falsely stating the cause of General Avramescu's death. Why didn't the Soviet Red Cross find the grave of Avramescu's daughter, who died in the hands of the K. G. B.? Or the cause of her death? Did not the K. G. B. abuse her, driving her to commit suicide? Unfortunately, very few people, if any, are able to perceive the thread of the hidden, permanent, inconsistent, inconsistently determinate and impetuous process of intrigues which make up Soviet logic.



CRUCEA ROŞIE
A
REPUBLICII POPULARE ROMÎNE
COMITETUL CENTRAL
STR. BISERICA AMZEI Nr. 28
TELEFON: 11.25.88

Nr. 9706

DIRECTIA RELATII EXTERNE

Către
Avramescu Adela
str. Paleologu nr.22
Raion T.Vladimirescu
- Loco -

Crucea Roşie din URSS ne-a rugat să vă comunicăm următoarele :

"Generalul de armată Avramescu Gheorghe, născut în anul 1884, a decedat la 3 martie 1945, în apropiere de oraşul Iasbereni, în urma unui bombardament al aviaţiei germane. El a fost înmormîntat la Seshalom - un cartier al oraşului Budapesta".

"Fiica sa, Avramescu-Sturza Felicia, născută în 1918, s-a sinucis la 6 martie 1945, Nu se cunoaşte unde a fost înmormîntată".

Crucea Roşie din URSS ne-a rugat, totodată, să vă trănsmitem fotografia alăturată, reprezentînd mormîntul generalului Avramescu.

Director
/ Traian Pătraşcu
R. Cavşan

Buc.26,VII.1963
RC/CF

Official document issued by the Red Cross of communist Romania falsely stating the cause of General Avramescu's death

Mrs. Avramescu was released from the Soviet camps in 1956. She returned to Romania with her feet wrapped in rags, due to swelling. Forget about wearing shoes!

She was indeed a lady and never discriminated against for racial or political reasons. She thought a man was what he was, from head to toes, to be respected and not to be looked down upon. It was, indeed, she who helped thousands of wretched

families, yes, Soviet families, children picked up from city streets or vagrants, providing them with shelter and hot meals!

After the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 — "the Prague Spring" — in order to boost up their own morale and to gain adherents, the Romanian communist leaders in Bucharest rekindled Romanian patriotism. (In fact, this was meant to be an additional stage in Soviet-style international policy. All those who can be exploited for the benefit of the communist leadership are enlisted in the trend.)

For Avramescu's distinguished merits and for his exemplary conduct, the communist leaders in Bucharest presented their apologies to Mrs. Avramescu (her last known address is Paleologul Street, Number 22, Bucharest, Romania) for the mistakes committed by the Soviets. Mrs. Avramescu was granted a monthly pension of approximately 3,000 lei from the communist state funds. Moreover, the Romanian (communist) Secret Service — called *Securitate* — began inquiries among former officers, comrades in arms of General Avramescu, in order to find the cause of his death for future historical documentation. However, there was no mention of the fact that at his death the general was in Soviet custody.

Photo supplied by the Soviet Red Cross showing the grave of General Avramescu

Nice and beautiful, indeed! But what happened to other political detainees, deported — in "scrap-iron" railway cars — to the Soviet Union, of which only a few returned? In their great majority, these detainees were officers and soldiers who did nothing else but fulfill their duty to their own country — Romania. And those who — towards the end of 1955 and the beginning of 1956 — returned to Romania, were not given any material support, which was denied even to the families of those who had found their bitter end in the Auschwitzes of the East.

But we shall speak about them later on.

Among others, I should like to mention the widows and the orphans of war, whose husbands and fathers had died on the Eastern Front up to August 23, 1944. These widows and orphans — in their great majority — did not receive any pensions. For the few who did — the pensions were small and insignificant compared to those received by the widows and orphans of those fallen on the Western Front after August 23, 1944. Should the dead be blamed for the places they died in? They had been sent there to fulfill their duty and had not much choice but to go.

Regardless of the plot against Avramescu, his family should not have been persecuted, especially after what the general and his wife did for the population of the Crimea and especially because he was decorated by the Kremlin.

In conclusion, the humanitarian statement made by the Attorney General of the Soviet Union, R. A. Rudenko, at the Nuremberg trials is void, or, rather, it becomes an accusation against the Soviets.

THE RUSSIAN EXPERIENCE

Since we came to talk about "experiences," why not talk further about them, especially about the Russian experience? The Russians were always present in camps in large groups belonging to all social classes and from all parts of the huge empire. As I said before, the Russians suffer from megalomania, which they can't get rid of, but at the same time they have their own giants, giants who amazed the world — more or less. One of these Russian giants — linked to old Mother Russia in body and soul — was Georgi K. Zhukov, marshal of the Soviet Union. Zhukov never was in the death camps at Vorkuta, Iavas, Inta, Sakhalin or Karaganda, but his men were there. Who were his men and why were they in concentration camps? These are questions asked by all those lingering in the gulag. It is a sad but true experience!

During all my stay in the Soviet death camps, beginning with Potsdam, Bautzen and ending with Vorkuta, I had the opportunity to talk to soldiers and officers of different ranks in the Soviet army — Russians by origin. The Russian soldiers and officers were not the only ones to worship or sympathize with Marshal Zhukov. The simple folk, especially those from the countryside, did so, too. Why?

When, towards the end of 1942, Zhukov took the supreme command of the front at Stalingrad — the Soviet Colonel Boris Andreevich Z. told me this — he had been known for a long time in the Soviet army. First, he was a pure Russian, with a healthy social origin, as the communists used to say. Second, he was one who knew the life of a soldier and who had not forgotten it, as often happens. With his assuming command at Stalingrad, the hope of the Russians rose while the eyes of

Political detainees — mostly Russians — amateur actors on the stage of Camp 2, Mine 7, Vorkuta. Vorkuta, 1954

the entire world were turned towards that beleaguered city and especially towards this man. Here, at Stalingrad, the outcome of the war could be decided. If the German troops took and held the city, Moscow would be lost. It is also true that, if American help did not arrive in time, the Russians could not resist. But the Russians needed an idol, an idol they could trust and through whom a new strength could be reborn, to lead to the liberation of Russia.

Stalin, or those who advised him, knew very well what they were doing. A Russian had to be put in charge and not one of Georgian, Armenian, Ukrainian or Jewish origin. A Russian — to get his own way. And the best man for the task was Zhukov. Meanwhile, in order to be officially represented within the high command of the army at Stalingrad, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union sent Georgi Malenkov — a member of the Central Committee and also a Russian in soul and body and a good friend of Zhukov — to Stalingrad.

Marshal Georgi K. Zhukov

I don't want to go into the historical details of the fighting at Stalingrad — already described by many historians and eye-witnesses — but I should like to point out that at Stalingrad certain things happened but, for some reason, intentionally or by imposition, were forgotten. But the Russian soldiers and officers did not forget these things, and any time they used to speak about Stalingrad or about Zhukov, they repeated — with profusion of detail — a story which became a legend for them. A legend for which they had fought and some had died, hoping for a better tomorrow. I should like to tell this story as I have heard it because I, later on, became convinced that this legend — if we want to call it that — had a little bit of truth in it.

Before the start of the fighting for the defense of the so-called wall of Stalingrad, the supreme commander, Zhukov, assisted by the representative of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, Malenkov, addressed the troops through a special communique for that day. After recalling (for every Russian soldier) the name of old Mother Russia (in many Russian cartoons, Russia is represented as an old woman and not as a bear) and reminding the soldiers that Russia was partly occupied by German troops and the war was for life or death, the communique said, "Soldiers, if we succeed in liberating old Mother Russia from the Nazi hordes and become vanquishers, I give you my word of honor as a Russian that I shall do whatever is in my power to give you land!" All this was said in front of the representative from Moscow.

Zhukov's appointment as deputy of the supreme commander of the army and his taking charge of the front at Stalingrad on August 27, 1942, marked the start of the direct collaboration between him and Malenkov: Zhukov as commander of the front, Malenkov as political commissar and representative of the Kremlin. Two Russian idealists, from head to toe. Stalin knew what he was doing or had been well advised!

The liberation of old Mother Russia and the promise to give land to the peasants were mentioned on the eve of the Soviet counteroffensive at Stalingrad, around November 20, 1942. From now on, led by a Zhukov and a Malenkov — both Russian by origin — and, on top of that, having been promised land, the Russian soldier knew why and for whom to fight.

During the October, 1917 Revolution and the post-revolutionary years of internal fighting, one of the best-known slogans all over Russia at the Bolsheviks' meetings was "death to the golden epaulets." What were these golden epaulets, and who wore them?

All the officers and cadets, as well as the junkers, wore them. When the Revolution took place and there were already two armies — the Red and the White — a great many of the units of the White Army were made up of these officers, cadets, and junkers who were part of the elite corps, which gave the biggest headache to the Red Army command, and because of them the Red Army suffered the heaviest casualties. Through their outward appearance and inner discipline, these elite units represented the best in the Tsarist army, the intelligentsia and the wealth of Russia. Therefore, it was these wearers of the golden epaulets who had to be destroyed.

In their great majority — guilty or not — they were executed, imprisoned or deported. That is, those who were caught. Fueled by the Soviet commissars, the people's hate grew stronger. All those who wore golden epaulets got rid of them and ran away as if threatened by the black plague. The best proof of this epaulet hunt — left intentionally or unintentionally as an historical document — is those Soviet movies which portray certain early stages of the Revolution, until around 1923. Those who had the chance to watch those movies could see the truth of what I said if they had not seen it at the time of the actual events. Through the persecution and destruction of the golden epaulets, the Soviet communists tried to scare people and often succeeded, thereby burying Tsarism and hundreds of years of Russian history.

Now, after 25 years of existence of the Soviet state, at the time when German troops occupied a great part of the Soviet Union, neither the Russian peasants nor the new Russian intelligentsia were enthusiastic about Bolshevism. The Russian peasants of the twentieth century, like the Russian serfs during Napoleon's wars against Russia, were waiting for their freedom. In Napoleon's time, the liberators were supposed to be the French; during the German occupation of Russia, the hope was pinned to their army. Napoleon made a mistake by allying himself with the Russian landowners. He did not understand the simple but pure soul of the Russian serf. Later on, this capital mistake was repeated by the leaders of the Third Reich.

The Russian peasant was fed up with Bolshevism and communist theory, especially after Stalin's collectivization policy of 1932. Land was always promised to the Russian peasantry, but it was never given to them. Often they could not get even the two square meters for a grave, especially after the Soviet Revolution.

Like any poor man in many parts of the world, the Russian peasant can be happy only when he has a plot of land to be his and only his.

After Stalin's forced mass collectivization, the well-to-do peasants — also called "kulaks" — were deported or, most of the time, shot. The other peasants were told that there would be no more class differentiation and that everyone would be equal.

But with the formation of the collective farms and of the state farms — which sprang up like mushrooms after the rain — party-appointed administrators (also called the "new kulaks") took charge. They were numerous, mostly uneducated, lazy,

and eager to get rich through someone else's work. They were also the informers of the party.

Neither the political indoctrination lectures nor the party-controlled newspapers and their so-called cultural propaganda establishments (houses of culture) could make the Russian peasant change his mind. This is the phenomenon which the West can not understand in the Russian mentality. The Russian peasant has suffered too much not to realize what he is doing. He lives today just for today, and regarding tomorrow he has a wait-and-see attitude. There are three very important things in the life of the Russian peasant: eating, drinking, and having a woman, because tomorrow no one knows what orders the head of the collective or state farm will give and where the Russian peasant will have to go. In his own country, the Russian peasant has become a nomad.

Only then did the Kremlin leaders see the real situation and the great danger, that is, when the German troops were at the walls of the cities of Leningrad, Moscow and Stalingrad, when the Ukraine, the Baltic states, Byelorussia and part of Russia herself were under German occupation and the Russian soldier was not in a fighting mood at all. All this could be seen in the military disasters suffered by the Soviets. Therefore, they had to come up with something new, a new formula, an incentive to stir national pride and the love of fighting for their country in the Russian peasants.

The former colonel, Boris Andreevich Z., further told me that "only the cunning head of a Jew could have come up with the new lie, and this was Kaganovich and his gang — one of Stalin's trusted people!" To make this real, they changed the uniforms of the officers of the Red Army as well as the rank system, going back to the old uniforms, namely to the golden epaulets for which tens of thousands of people had died. Where was the communist slogan now? Where was "Death to the golden epaulets?" Were the Soviets switching back to the Tsarist system? This bad-taste performance had a sequel: The pill was swallowed breathlessly, not only by the Russian peasant, but also by the West and its experts and all its diplomats, who savored it as a delicious rarity. It is a pity that even today there still are some who do not recognize the deadly side effects of these Soviet pills.

The golden epaulets and the promise to get land had their effect on the soul of the Russian. From that time on, he felt interested in liberating Russia and in final victory.

Another bait for the West and especially for the Russian

peasant — which the Kremlin put on its fishing line, throwing it into the water, and which many fish of different nationalities and races jumped to swallow hungrily — was the medals of the Order of Suvorov, the Order of Kutuzov, etc., etc. The only exception was the Order of Saint George, which was forbidden.

Many of those who had such orders and medals from the First World War were asked to wear them and were the focus of much attention. However, the Soviets never wrote about it, and I think that statistics regarding the truth could not be produced, i. e., how many paid with their lives for their medals.

Many of these were taken out of museums (where they had been found); people were photographed wearing them as heroes, but after that they had to be returned or "donated" to the same museums as historical items. All this to prove the change in appearance of the Soviet regime. But an old folk saying says: "The wolf sheds his hair but never his character!" I can't help thinking that there are still some who believe in this baloney! From that moment on, and especially after Zhukov's victory over von Paulus, the Soviet army got a new idol besides Stalin, the one imposed by the Kremlin. As the days passed, Zhukov became better known and also more loved by the army and the people. Stalin was falling behind.

All this would have consequences in Zhukov's life and especially among his entourage. The majority of these trustworthy people paid very dearly for their loyalty to the marshal in the Soviet death camps at Vorkuta, Norilsk, Sakhalin or Karaganda.

The steps of glory took Zhukov as high as possible. Reaching with his troops the gates of Berlin, he was not given permission to take the city on his own though he had the capacity to do it. The laurels had to be split! Then he was sent into Czechoslovakia to liquidate the last remnants of the German army under the command of General Schoerner, who had not recognized the capitulation signed by Admiral Doenitz.

Beria, the head of the K. G. B. and Stalin's trusted executioner, took incessant care to gather the necessary documents to compromise Zhukov.

After the victory over Germany, the marshal's star had to fade away, but they had to find a reason for it. In the West it was he who was being acclaimed, not Stalin. The envy grew deeper when the military experts of the Second World War proposed the erection of a monument honoring the best strategists

of the war, on Alderney, a small island at the entrance to the English channel. Two blueprints were made for the construction of this monument, which was to represent the following four strategists: Eisenhower, Montgomery, Rommel and Zhukov (not Stalin). Under the influence and pressure of the Western media, Zhukov was made the supreme commander of the Soviet occupation troops in Germany.

During all of the marshal's stay in Germany, the Russians showed their love towards and especially their trust in their supreme commander. During that time, the Soviet troops were quartered in barracks surrounded by regular fences, and the soldiers used to walk freely.

The moment Zhukov was replaced — in April, 1946 — with army General Sokolovsky, everything was reversed one hundred and eighty degrees.

Regarding the marshal's assignment after his departure from Germany, there are several versions. The press of those times published a Kremlin communique from the Soviet news agency, T. A. S. S.: "Marshal Zhukov has been replaced and has been given the function of military commander of the territory of Odessa." After two months, other news toured the Earth, announcing that the marshal had been given a new strategic military mission in Siberia. Every honest man in the West or East had to ask himself how it was possible that a military man of Zhukov's calibre, decorated four times as a hero of the Soviet Union, one of the four military strategists recognized in the entire world, had been given command of a territory such as Odessa or even Siberia!

Zhukov was the man to be pushed aside because he was a true myth of the Russians, a man whom Stalin began to fear, thinking that the day might come when the war hero would assume power. This was one version of his transfer.

Another version was that told to me by former military members of the marshal's entourage when I was taken by the K. G. B. to their special center in Nonnenkloster, Potsdam, in the summer of 1947. I arrived there one year after Zhukov had left Germany.

At the Nonnenkloster center, I met many officers who had worked directly under the marshal. These people had been arrested (and charged) — in their great majority — because they continued to sympathize with Zhukov and especially because they had trusted, and continued to trust, his word. Of course, a hole had been found in each man's coat so he

could be sentenced. It was very interesting to see how these officers — who were part of a victorious army — at that time, less than two years after the victory, were being sentenced as traitors to their country, charged with spying (of course, for the Americans).

Such "educational" centers of the K. G. B. were all over the place — as I was informed — even in Austria, Romania, and Czechoslovakia. Those who still sympathized with the heroic marshal were being arrested and thrown into prisons or camps. These soldiers or officers were nicknamed "Zhukovites."

The K. G. B. center at Potsdam was headed at that time by Lieutenant General Zelenin. He bragged in front of several high-ranking Russian officers — who at that time were being detained at Potsdam — that he, personally, had taken Zhukov to Moscow and that the marshal was indeed someone (not "nobody" like them). Therefore, he, Zelenin, did not have to be bothered with some petty officers of whose calibre there were plenty around.

A former colonel, chief of a cultural relations section and a former member of Zhukov's staff, related a minor incident in which the marshal had been involved and which had contributed somehow to his falling into disgrace. I don't know how much truth is in it though it seems credible.

The victory of the Allies over Nazi Germany and the subsequent division of Germany into four military zones led to contacts and budding friendships among the officers of the four powers. In their spare evenings, these officers used to meet in different military clubs to spend a few hours together as they indeed deserved. Berlin was the place with the greatest potential for this sort of meeting. American, British, and French officers began to visit the Soviet military clubs, and vice versa. Among the male and female military personnel of the Allied armies many relationships developed. There were even some weddings during this period.

Whereas contemporary ladies' fashion with all its well known styles, such as miniskirts, is not something extraordinarily new, in those days things were different. I can say for sure that I read an article regarding statistics on fashion and length of skirts in one of the American newspapers published in Europe, in the summer of 1946. On the graph presented, I could read data regarding the length of skirts worn by different women who were part of the auxiliary troops of the Allied forces in Berlin. Thus the English woman who was considered modest wore a

skirt one finger above the knee; the French woman — coquettish and full of life — wore a skirt two fingers above the knee; the American woman — cheerful and foolish — wore her skirt four fingers above the knee; and the Russian woman wore hers a palm above the knee. This leads to the conclusion that the miniskirt fashion after the war was not brought about by the fashion houses of Paris or London but was shown for the first time by the girls of the Soviet army.

While the Allied officers threw parties together and kept up the meetings, their commanders did not fall behind. Today it is well known that General Eisenhower, Field Marshal Montgomery, General de Gaulle and Marshal Zhukov used to get together very often.

One day, at the beginning of 1946, Eisenhower — after an official meeting among the Allies — asked Zhukov what he was going to do that evening and if he had any plans. The answer was "no." Eisenhower and Montgomery had invitations to London, to a ball of English high society. They asked their Russian counterpart to join them. Time was very short, and, unable to turn down such a tempting invitation, the marshal agreed, especially after being told that they would be back the next morning.

Their arrival in London and their attendance at the ball itself, where the entire English aristocracy was gathered, made a deep impression upon Zhukov, who, in turn, made a great sensation among the English because, at that particular moment, three of the four great strategists of the war could be seen together.

The marshal was immediately surrounded and treated with utmost consideration. Everyone was eager to meet the great commander who had turned the tide of the war on the Eastern Front and had succeeded in crushing the German army at Stalingrad. Zhukov had a wonderful time, and at dawn he was back in Berlin, where no one knew about his trip to London.

But while he was returning to Berlin, a letter of complaint was being sent by the Soviet ambassador in London to the Kremlin, accusing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of neglecting to notify the Soviet embassy in London about the marshal's arrival in the British capital though the visit was not official.

The Kremlin was stunned since it knew nothing about the visit. The situation worsened when the K. G. B. — under the leadership of Lieutenant General Zelenin, the head of intelligence and counterintelligence for the Soviet occupation forces in

Germany — said that it could not have reported anything about the visit since it had had no knowledge of it.

Beria, the head of the K. G. B., poured gasoline on the fire, too. Consequently, little by little, the weight of the accusations pulled Zhukov down, and in a short period of time he had to leave his post as commander of the Soviet occupation forces in Germany. General Sokolovsky replaced him, and from that moment on a wind of a different kind began to blow among the Allies. The first Soviet restrictions appeared: The barracks were surrounded by high, wooden fences; the Soviet officers ended all relationships with their colleagues in the Western armies. Even the visiting of clubs was stopped, and the majority of those who had close relationships — regardless of the fact that they belonged to the Soviet army or to the auxiliary corps — were sent back to Russia. Those who remained were forbidden any new contacts. From that time on, the great period of Soviet desertions began, beginning with soldiers and ending with generals. Why?

Did the members of a victorious army desert because they fared too well? Or did they see with their own eyes the big difference between what they had been told and reality?

"When I arrived at Halle, in the region of the sugar refineries in Germany," I was told by a former captain of the Soviet troops occupying that particular region, "having been appointed chief of the military headquarters in a working-class neighborhood, I called the mayor and asked him to take us to the houses of the German workers in the sugar industry and show them to us. In spite of the fact that the war had lasted for years, in all the houses we visited there was a cleanliness and neatness typically German. Everything was arranged with taste, but the most important thing that caught my attention was the fact that every apartment had a bathroom, a radio, and even a sewing machine. After I visited these houses, I asked the mayor — through our interpreter, who was with us — to take us to the workers' houses. (I thought the houses we had just visited belonged to the leaders of the community.)

"Paradoxically, I and the other Soviet officers did not think that we had just visited the workers' houses because these were not the ones described to us at our political meetings in the Soviet Union. We had been told that the German workers lived in mud huts, in misery. Now, for the first time in my life, I realized that I had been lied to and blinded by impudence, especially since the mayor kept telling us emphatically that

these were the 'poor' people, the workers of the sugar industry. How, then, were the rich living? In the Soviet Union even the most well-to-do did not have houses so neatly arranged as the homes of these German proletarians. Not to mention poor Ivan.

"From that moment on, I started to look at things with different eyes, and each time I discovered something new. I asked myself: If the standard of living of these workers (who — we had been told — had suffered under the Nazi regime) was superior to that of our intelligentsia, then how could one live who was willing to work in a free country like America, for instance, under no Nazi or Bolshevik dictatorship? To tell you the truth, the majority of the officers and soldiers in my unit thought the same way. I saw many comrades-in-arms buying things and sending them home to the Soviet Union, to show those at home just a little of the Western miracle. I recall that one of my comrades saw a bunch of pictures showing the houses we visited, houses belonging to the German proletariat, i. e., the interiors of the houses or groups of workers in the family or other similar scenes. There were also some pictures of peasant households and their work tools.

"You can imagine why these Soviet men who had come to a West known to them only through political indoctrination — and therefore really unknown — were stunned. They realized they had been lied to, that reality was altogether different, and that the frenzy of victory could not blind them any more. Therefore, they took with them whatever they could find, to take home and show the truth to those left at home. The war was the bridge they had had to cross in order to find out about the way of life and freedom of the West."

This is what one of the thousands of Soviet officers from the victorious armies thought. The great majority of these men who had discovered civilization could no longer swallow the big Soviet lie, and because of this we find many of them imprisoned or deported on the huge stretches of land in the Soviet Union. However, we find some of them still in the army and assigned to guard some of their former comrades. Their fate is still the same, with the only difference that the former could not abstain from talking openly while the latter showed their attitude towards what they had seen by the way they began to dress and by their behavior.

From all these I could gather if the Soviet officer or soldier had passed — on his way westward — through Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Austria, or

Germany — or only through the Baltic states. Living among these people, I could recognize the great changes which had taken place in them, intellectually and spiritually.

The tough fate of war opened their road to a new belief, a hope in a happier future. One should take for granted what certain Soviet officers said about the guidelines of the supreme command of the Soviet army regarding the behavior of the Soviet troops in foreign territories. The huge conglomerate of nations and of different characters was hard to curtail. Especially the system of waiting for an order from the top was one of their gravest mistakes because haughtiness and arrogance could not be overcome even if mistakes were made.

By accident, I came across the book *Recollections and Reflections*, written by Marshal Zhukov, the man spoken highly of by others, the man whom I always respected — and shall respect — sincerely.

I do not want to criticize this book, but from what I read in it, I realized that there was Soviet censorship even for Zhukov. He could not write freely, in spite of who he was, even though Stalin had died a long time before.

I read the book in Romanian translation. I shall begin with the beginning and compare its contents to the testimony of the eyewitnesses who fought against the Soviets or on their side, enemies and friends who in the end shared the same fate.

Towards the end of 1953, on November 21, I was taken from the central prison at Vorkuta — where I had been locked up during and after the trial of the Vorkuta strikers (I shall come back with details regarding my "transfer") — to Camp 11 for those punished with special regimen.

Among the detainees I met there, were two Finns, a lieutenant and a major, who had fought in the Finnish-Soviet War of 1939 to 1940. From the conversation I had with them as well as with some Soviets who had taken part in that war, I realized the staunchness and the patriotism of the Finns. They — as well as the Soviets — confirmed the episode at Viipuri as told to me in cell 14, at Nonnenkloster by Konstantin Konstantinovich.

For me it was inconceivable how Marshal Zhukov could describe — with a profusion of detail — the fighting at Khalkhin Gol (between the Russians and the Japanese which ended in a stalemate) without mentioning a single word about the Finns. Let me not lie twice! Zhukov mentioned just the words "Finnish-Russian" and that is all. I — not being a Soviet — could be excused for saying "Finnish-Russian" instead of "Finnish-Soviet," as reflecting reality. As is well known, at Viipuri there were troops from all over the Soviet Union — a great many of them from southern Siberia.

It was not by pure chance that Zhukov praised the heroism of the Russian troops at Khalkhin Gol, and forgot to talk about the Finnish-Soviet War where — though winning a political victory — the Soviets suffered a crushing defeat on the battlefield. The marshal had no praises in the latter case.

The tactical gains of the Soviets -- following their battles against the Japanese and against the Finns — made them greedy. They felt the urge to grab new territories. Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina were the next territories snatched by force — from the Romanians.

From the beginning of May, 1940, Zhukov was the commander of the special military region of Kiev, where he remained until January 31, 1941. On June 26, 1940, Moscow gave an ultimatum to Romania demanding the ceding of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina. On June 27, the Romanian Council of the Crown met in Bucharest under the presidency of King Charles II. Upon advice received from Berlin, the Council agreed to cede those Romanian territories to the Russians. On June 29, 1940 — the day of the Saints Peter and Paul — the Soviet occupation troops poured into Bessarabia and northern Bukovina.

An unsatiated thirst to peek into the minds of people and into their way of living drove the Soviet administration and the "clairvoyants" in the Kremlin to concentrate their attention upon certain people and social classes through whom they intended to infuse the communist education praised and imposed by Marxist dogma.

I think the Soviet system's only chance to make different kinds of people cohabitate in their mixed-up society — regardless of race or nationality — is the Soviet death camps. Only in these camps could the men of science — doing research on mentality, customs, races, places of origin, fraternity with other nationalities or relationships among different native languages from one end of the world to the other — find the desired subjects or materials. I do not think that the transfer of people to special camps with a different climate (unlike that of their native place) was being done by pure chance or through lack of knowledge but in a sure and preplanned way. One could find representatives of all nations, from all parts of the world, in each and every death camp. Here one could truly study the mentality of each nationality. Those nationalities recorded in different history books

as being on an extinction course could be very well represented here: From the members of some tribes of shepherds in the Caucasus or those of some migratory tribes in Siberia to Cossacks from the Kuban or the Don who considered themselves not only Cossacks but "a certain kind of Cossak" after their native place, linked to an old tradition with ancient customs which even here, in the camps, they preserved and practiced piously.

In our death camp of Mine 7 there were, for instance, a significant number of people of which only a few had files with the Soviet authorities. They came from southern Bessarabia and were called Gagautzes, a nationality which even the greatest historians of the world — such as Nicolae Iorga, for instance — could not trace to any native place. According to some, they come from Anatolia; according to others they come from Bulgaria. One thing is sure: Their native language is Turkish with some Slavic additions, and their religion is Christian Orthodox. They are known to have been colonized — they could as well have migrated — during the Ottoman Empire in southern Bessarabia. Their settlements — even from ancient times — were called "gagautze," like their generic name, which can be translated into the Turkish language.

Why did the Soviets bestow on them the happiness of displacing them to far-away Siberia, to Kamchatka or Kalima, around Lake Baikal or to the camps at Norilsk and Vorkuta, where the majority of them could be found. They had been tagged by the Soviets with the words "political prisoner" or "deportee" and not with "common criminal." A very interesting thing was that the inhabitants of an entire village from southern Bessarabia, Baimaklia, were represented in a proportion of 20 per cent in the camps at Vorkuta. All had been farmers — from father to son, now remolded as "Soviet miners." Such a miner — who worked in the first brigade in Mine 7 — by the name of Boris Terzi ("terzi" means "tailor" in English) became my friend after I got to know him better. Since I have always been a curious man by nature, I got closer to him spiritually, to learn as much as possible about his kin and their customs since they were almost totally unknown to me, personally.

Our relationship went so far — I remember it well — that he considered me a friend to whom he could talk openly, without fear. Together we made various fantastic plans for the future. This is how I learned about my friend Terzi's life, with its happy and sad sides. He was the son of a thrifty peasant from the village of Baimaklia, as I said before. He was married and had

two children and was serving a 25-year sentence for anti-Soviet propaganda and for being the son of a kulak, or well-to-do peasant.

Here is what he told me: "After marrying my mother, who brought in her share of property as dowry, my father managed to husband a household having approximately 5 hectares of farm land, an orchard, and a vineyard. He had to work hard to raise us, his four children, and always his management skills and his commercial spirit let us enjoy the fruits of our work every autumn. Our entire community made up a village which was small but flourishing and had no preconceived political orientation.

"After the end of the First World War and the reunion of Bessarabia to Romania, we, the Gagautzes, did not gain any personal advantages. For the Romanians we were an insignificant minority. But we had many wounds to be healed now that the war, with the coming and going of the troops, was over.

"Years passed, life went on, and soon everything was forgotten. Our work as peasants went badly. We hardly had time to think of anything else besides our family and our household. However, we waited impatiently for a holiday in order to meet — young and old — at a dance called the 'hora' at the village pub.

"The events brought about by the new war made us feel even more the misfortunes of that epoch on our own hides. The events in the Soviet Union, with the building of the communist state, left us cool and did not bear any weight in our village, especially because several times refugees from Russia would pass by and tell us in horror about the terror, mass deportations, etc., mostly around 1932 and 1933. In 1940, on the day of Saints Peter and Paul, when the Soviet troops entered Bessarabia, our village elders — who had lived during the rule of the Russian Tsars, too, but did not know anything about Communism — kept saying loudly that life was better under the Russians than under the Romanians though they had no reason to complain against the Romanian administration.

"The Romanian troops had orders to retreat only along certain preestablished routes, a fact known to everybody. In spite of this, in order to create incidents and to have serious pretexts for the occupation, the Soviet command spearheaded troops beyond the territorial limits agreed upon with the Romanian administration. Two Soviet tanks on a spearhead mission reached our village, Baimaklia, which lay along the national highway on which the Romanian troops were flowing in retreat. Our

villagers received the unexpected Soviet visit with a question mark. However, there were some who invited the Soviets to take a sip of vodka. After the Reds drank a little bit, one of the commanders asked the villagers if they had any complaint against the Romanians; if the Romanians had taken anything from them as — the Soviets claimed — had happened in other villages through which they had passed. Once the suggestion was given, a reaction followed immediately: One complained to the Soviet commander that the Romanians had taken his cart and horses and even a cow from the stable. What the Soviet commander did not know was that the peasant had never had such possessions. He was a poor man from a neighboring village and worked as a farmhand for a well-to-do man in our village. The very moment when other complaints began to be heard, someone showed up and said that there was a Romanian military unit coming closer, along the highway. The Soviet commander — who by this time had quenched his thirst with vodka — proposed that everyone go to the highway and, once there, if someone recognized anything taken by a Romanian, he would repossess it. The Soviet commander's proposal went from mouth to mouth like a streak of lightning, and, suddenly, everyone in the village was claiming that he had been the victim of the Romanians and asking for the help of the Soviets, who seemed quite pleased, and so the entire village — from young to old — accompanied by the two Soviet tanks, reached the highway. The Soviets positioned their tanks on the left and right of the highway. It so happened that the Romanian unit was from Valcea or Rosiorii de Vede and was executing an orderly retreat so as not to give opportunity for incidents.

"The great surprise of the Romanian soldiers was when one of the villagers walked up to a horse-drawn cart, pushed the Romanian soldier down and began to yell as loud as he could that the cart and horses were his. At this, the Soviet commander from the turret of the tank bid him to repossess his property, to roars of laughter from the other villagers. The Romanians, however, had strict orders. They were not to answer any act of provocation.

"For the villagers, the first and second grab seemed rather difficult. After that, they took all the carts and horses from the Romanians. Even the Romanian commander — who was seated with his wife in a carriage — was thrown out of it by one of the villagers, who subsequently left with the carriage. The commander's wife was so scared that — in the hurry — she left

her new-born baby (who was sleeping in a basket) in the carriage. (Even after the Romanians returned to Bessarabia, in 1941, and after desperate searches, the baby could not be found. Nobody knew anything about it.)

"After the inventory of the Romanian military unit was disposed of by the villagers of Baimaklia under the protection of the two Soviet tank commanders and there was nothing left to take, some villagers even began to deprive the Romanian soldiers and officers of their clothes, sometimes even taking off their boots after 'miraculously' recognizing them to be their own.

"At the end of this performance, an unusual thing happened which at first made some laugh but much later on made them sorry, though too late.

"A Romanian Gypsy — who had the rank of sergeant — was forced, also, to take off his boots. He was one of the last marchers of the military unit. After he got moderately far away — approximately one hundred meters — from that damned spot, he turned around and yelled at the villagers, 'You peasants! You may laugh now that you have stripped the Romanians of their clothes and made fun of them, but the time will come when the lot of you will run in all directions to find a Romanian shit to worship . . . ' The Gypsy could not finish his speech because boos, curses and stones forced him to run away quickly so as not to lose touch with his unit, and especially not to risk his own olive skin.

"The villagers laughed at this incident, but to many of them it was clear that what they had done was no good and that if some day the wheel of fortune were to spin the other way around, they would have to pay dearly for their actions.

"After a few days, the Soviet troops were quartered in the villagers' houses. The first incidents of banditry and rape began to appear, and the requisitions for the Soviet army left the villagers stark naked. Those who hid things from the requisitioners were beaten, threatened with deportation to Siberia, or sentenced on the spot.

"What did those people who could hardly wait for the Russians to come and kept praising them have to say? Not even two months had passed since the arrival of the Soviet 'liberators,' and the peasants of Baimaklia and the surrounding areas, as well as those of all Bessarabia and Bukovina began to think with horror of their future. After two months, the villagers began to remember the prophecy of the Gypsy when the Soviet military

command issued the order that all the things which belonged to the Romanian military unit — yes, even the smallest object — had to be turned over to the Soviet authorities. Those who afterwards might be found in possession of such objects would be arrested. The beautiful dream of the villagers was dispelled. The Gypsy was right.

" 'Why did we throw stones at him?' asked some, blaming themselves.

"A year had hardly passed when the Romanian troops — by order of General Antonescu — returned along the same road. Now every villager was trembling, thinking about the reprisals which had to follow. Indeed, a few of them, proven to be the instigators, were arrested and sentenced to different punishments. But after less than two years, they came back to their homes following a general amnesty by General Antonescu.

"After three more years, the Soviets returned. Now they were the ones who were looking for the guilty. Needless to say, no villager had taken anything from the Soviets; on the contrary, the Soviets were the ones who had grabbed — if there was anything left to grab. However, many villagers had to bear the 'consequences.' The sentences of the Soviet courts used to be 25 years easily, and that assured you of a free trip to Siberia or the North Pole."

But how many would return home? Nobody knows. Boris Terzi had a 25-year sentence as traitor to the Soviet motherland. He never knew what he really had been sentenced for! However, he did not lose hope that the day would come when he would see his wife and two children and would be able to start a new life. But only if the mines at Vorkuta or in the tundra would not ask him to pay too high a price!

Didn't Marshal Zhukov know anything about the Soviet ultimatum to Romania — in agreement with Nazi Germany? Was he not informed about the movement of Soviet troops towards the Romanian border through the military region which he himself controlled? Well, he does not say a word about this in his book. Not a single word! But, at the same time, he points out that the French government led by Daladier and the British government led by Chamberlain — at the Munich conference on September 29 and 30, 1938 — agreed to the taking over of the Sudeten region of Czechoslovakia by Nazi Germany! In other words, the British and the French governments are blamed by Zhukov for Hitler's aggressive policy towards Czechoslovakia.

Now Zhukov also forgets to mention in his book that the resolution to deprive Czechoslovakia of the Sudetenland was adopted after the report and the proposals made by Lord Runciman (the British observer sent to the Sudeten region) were presented to the British Parliament; that the British Parliament approved the treaty of Munich 366 votes to 144; whereas the French Parliament approved the same treaty 535 votes to 75.

The historic truth is that in August, 1939, through the conclusion of the nonaggression treaty between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, the taking of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina from Romania by the Soviet Union — at Berlin's advice — had been agreed upon. Thus Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union (the first communist state in the world) shook hands, dividing the world as they liked.

Zhukov could not therefore say that — in his capacity as military leader at that time — he had had no knowledge that the war would begin on September 1, 1939, and that the Soviets joined the Nazis in the war against Poland, grabbing the lion's share right at the signing of the "nonaggression" treaty!

Since Britain and France joined to declare war on Nazi Germany, it is hard to understand why these two countries did not declare war on the Soviet Union, too, since the latter attacked Poland at the same time as Nazi Germany, and France and Britain claimed to have entered the war because Poland had been attacked.

Regarding the true face of the Soviet Union and her true intentions, as well as those of Britain and France, Zhukov proves to be of great help by revealing two secret stenograms referring to two meetings of the military missions of the Soviet Union, Britain and France on August 15 and 17, 1939, showing clearly the "peaceful" intentions propagated so much by Moscow, London, and Paris.

Stenogram of the meeting of the military missions of the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and France, on August 15, 1939. (The meeting started at 1007 hours – 10:07 a. m. – and ended at 1320 hours — 1:20 p. m.) Soviet army commander B. M. Shaposhnikov:

At the former meetings of the military missions we listened to the plan of the deployment of the French army in the West. According to the demands of the military missions of Britain and France and to the instructions of the military mission of the Soviet Union, I shall present the plan of deployment of the armed forces of the Soviet Union at its western borders.

Against aggression in Europe, the Red Army deploys and sends

to the front, in the European part of the Soviet Union, the following:

120 infantry divisions, 16 cavalry divisions, 5,000 heavy artillery pieces, 9,000 to 10,000 tanks, and between 5,000 and 5,500 airplanes (auxiliary planes not included), i. e., bombers and fighter planes.

These military effects do not include the military units of the fortified regions, the antiaircraft units, the coastal defense units, the reserve units which instruct the fill-in units, and the rear units.

Without showing in detail the manner of organization of the Red Army, I shall briefly tell you that an infantry division is made up of 3 regiments of fusiliers and two artillery regiments. The effective strength of one division is 19,000 men.

An army corps is made up of three divisions and has two artillery regiments. (Admiral Drax asks while talking to General Heywood if any of the officers is taking notes from the communique delivered by Shaposhnikov, and he receives an affirmative answer.)

The armies are made up of a variable number of corps – between 5 and 8 – and have at their disposal the proper light and heavy artillery, aviation and tank units.

The units in the fortified regions can be ready for fighting in a time interval between 4 to 6 hours from the sounding of the alarm.

The Soviet Union has fortified regions along its entire western border, from the Arctic Ocean to the Black Sea.

The call under arms develops in an interval of time between 8 and 20 days. The railway network allows, not only the concentration of forces at the border at the indicated time, but also the maneuvering of forces along the front line. Alongside the western border we have 3 to 5 lines of strategic railway going as far back as 300 kilometers.

At present we have at our disposal a sufficient number of big and powerful locomotives and of freight cars with a capacity double that of the former ones. Our trains transport a load twice as great as before. Their running speed has also increased.

We have an auto transportation system with appreciable possibilities and strategic highways which allow for the concentration of the auto transportation means along the front line.

I shall present now three probable variants – approved by the Military Mission of the Soviet Union – regarding the joint

actions of the armed forces of Britain, France and the Soviet Union in case of aggression in Europe.

The first variant applies when the bloc of the aggressors attacks Britain and France. In this case the Soviet Union will act with forces representing 70 percent of the armed forces which Britain and France direct against the main aggressor – Germany. (It is interesting to remark here that after France was attacked by Nazi Germany and forced to capitulate, the Soviet government sent a congratulatory telegram to Hitler!) I shall explain. For instance, if France and England direct 90 infantry divisions against Germany, then the Soviet Union will send 63 infantry divisions, 6 cavalry divisions and the corresponding number of artillery pieces, tanks and airplanes, totalling 2 million men.

The Northern Fleet of the Soviet Union is carrying on cross maneuvers near the the shores of Finland and Norway, outside their territorial waters, together with the Anglo-French squadron. The Baltic Fleet of the Soviet Union is also able to carry on cross maneuvers, coordinating them with the submarines, and to mine the territorial waters of East Prussia and Pomerania. The submarines of the Baltic Fleet of the Soviet Union will prevent the shipment of raw materials from Sweden for the main aggressor. (While Soviet army commander Shaposhnikov presents the plan of action, British Admiral Drax and General Heywood mark it on the board.)

The second variant of the military action comes when the aggression is directed against Poland and Romania. (Interesting to remark that the Soviet Union joined Nazi Germany in giving ultimata to these two countries.) The Soviet Union's participation in the war will become a reality only when France and Britain have an understanding with Poland and – if possible – with Lithuania as well as with Romania regarding the passing of our troops through Vilnius, Galicia, and Romania.

In this case the Soviet Union will act with 100 percent of the armed forces which Britain and France will immediately direct against Germany. For example, if England and France send 90 infantry divisions against Germany, then the Soviet Union will act with 90 infantry divisions and 12 cavalry divisions (with the corresponding artillery, aircraft and tanks).

The missions of the fleets of Britain and France remain the same as those indicated in the first variant.

In the South, the Soviet Fleet in the Black Sea will close the Danube Delta – in order to prevent the penetration of the

aggressor's submarines and of other possible naval forces – and the Bosphorus strait in order to prevent the penetration into the Black Sea of the surface flotillas of the enemy and of their submarines.

The third variant. This variant applies in case the main aggressor – using the territory of Finland, Estonia and Latvia – directs the aggression against the Soviet Union. (The Soviets were the first aggressors against Finland. They also attacked and occupied the Baltic states after reaching a secret agreement with Nazi Germany.) In this case, France and Britain must immediately enter the war against the aggressor or the bloc of aggressors.

Poland – linked by treaties to England and France – must immediately act against Germany and, according to an understanding between the governments of England and France and the government of Poland, must let our troops pass through the Vilnius-Galicia corridor.

It has been shown above that the Soviet Union will deploy 120 infantry divisions, 16 cavalry divisions, 5,000 heavy cannons, between 9,000 and 10,000 tanks, and between 5,000 and 5,500 aircraft. In this case France and England must act with forces equal to 70 percent of the above-mentioned forces of the Soviet Union and must immediately begin active warfare against the main aggressor.

The actions of the Anglo-French Fleet must be carried out as shown in the first variant.

Stenogram of the meeting of the military missions of the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and France on August 17, 1939. (The meeting started at 1007 hours -- 10:07 a. m. – and ended at 1343 hours – 1:43 p. m.) Marshal K. E. Voroshilov (presiding over the meeting): I declare the meeting of the military missions open. In today's meeting, we shall present data regarding the Soviet Union's air force. If there are no objections, allow me to give the floor to the head of the Military Air Force of the Workers and Peasants' Red Army, second-rank army commander Loktionov. (Loktionov takes the floor.)

Loktionov: The head of the General Staff of the Red Army, first-rank army commander Shaposhnikov, has shown that, in the European theatre, the Red Army will deploy 5,000 to 5,500 combat airplanes. This number represents those aircraft on the first line of the front, not counting the reserves.

From the figure above, modern aircraft represent 80 percent of the total aircraft and can reach the following speeds: 465 to 575 kilometers per hour and more (fighter planes); 460 to

550 kilometers per hour (bombers). The range of the bombers is between 1,800 and 4,000 kilometers; the bomb load is from 600 kilograms (old-fashioned planes) to 2,500 kilograms. The proportion among bombers, fighter planes and troops is: bombers – 55 percent; fighter planes – 40 percent; and troops – 5 percent.

The aircraft works of the Soviet Union are currently working in one shift, with the exception of a few which are working in two shifts and, for the actual necessities, build, on the average, 900 to 950 fighter planes per month (besides civil and training aircraft).

Regarding the spread of aggression in Europe and the Orient, our aircraft industry has taken the necessary steps to increase production to the volume required for war.

The main aircraft units can be ready for combat – in case the alarm is given – in an interval of 1 to 4 hours. The service units are always combat ready.

In the initial stage of the war, the actions of the air force will take place in conformity with the plans issued by the general staff. The general principle of action of the air force is determined by the necessity to concentrate the efforts of all military means – on the ground as well as in the air – in the direction of the main strike. Consequently, the air force will carry out missions in close cooperation with the ground forces on the battlefield and on the long range of the operation being carried out.

The targets of the bombers will be the live strength of the enemy and a series of its important military strongholds. In addition, the bombers will receive missions to act against military targets to be found at a greater distance behind the enemy front. The Soviet air force does not set forth as an objective the bombing of the civilian population.

The fighter planes have the mission – besides defending some important military objectives, railroads and highways – of covering the concentration of ground and aircraft forces, protecting the big cities in close cooperation with the other means of antiaircraft defense (antiaircraft artillery and others), fighting against the enemy air force, and guarding the actions of the bombers and of the assault planes on the battlefield and in close cooperation with these. (Marshal Burnett has the floor.)

Burnett: In the name of the French and British missions I should like to express thanks to General Loktionov for the precise presentation of his communique. Personally, I am very much

impressed with the energy and organizing spirit with which the Soviet Union has obtained such remarkable results in the building of its air force. (Reproduced from the Soviet magazine *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn*, Number 3, 1959.)

The question arises: Was the Soviet Union sincere towards Britain and France, and at the same time sincere at the conclusion of the treaty with Nazi Germany?

One thing is sure: In both cases, the Soviet Union kept the lion's share. First fill your pockets! The hell with decency!

Further on, Zhukov complains about the attitude of the Allies after the war, but he forgets that the Soviets themselves have set a bad example in deportment and attitude.

At the Nuremberg trials, the Soviet Union should have been seated on the bench of the accused for unleashing the war against Poland, Romania, and the Baltic states! And if the Soviet Union, Britain and France had a secret understanding which was never made public, then Britain and France were also accomplices in the death of millions of innocent people killed during World War II.

During my stay in the Soviet concentration camps, among the numerous nations represented there were the Poles: from the members of the Polish embassy staff in Moscow in 1939 (who did not agree to collaborate with the Soviets as the members of the Polish forces of the London and Lvov Polish governments did) to the Polish prisoners taken in 1939 and the Polish partisans who had fought against the German troops at first and against the Soviet troops later on. All the Polish social classes were represented in the camp.

Among the important people there was the former Polish military attache in Moscow in 1939, Count Racipadevski, whom I met in 1950 in Moscow, at the Krasni Pres Prison. He was serving a 20-year sentence, of course for espionage.

In 1955, in Death Camp 1 at Potma, there was Count Mihalski, Polish diplomat. These two refused to collaborate in any manner whatsoever with the Soviets.

All these people (regardless of the fact that they were young or old, peasants, workers, or intellectuals) formed a national unity movement. They were Polish first and foremost.

Beginning with September, 1944, and especially after the war, the international press has discussed and continues to discuss an event interpreted by each person to suit his interests. I am referring to the Warsaw uprising.

With the occupation of the eastern bank of the Vistula River and the creation of a bridgehead toward Warsaw by the Soviet troops and the troops of the First Polish Army, which was fighting alongside the Soviets, the command of the Polish Resistance under the leadership of Tadeus Bor-Komarovski liberated Warsaw from the Germans.

How did this happen? As the Soviets and the First Polish Army kept pushing the front closer to the banks of the Vistula and right in front of Warsaw, the Soviets secured a bridgehead, and the commander of the Polish rebels, Bor-Komarovski (who had prepared an uprising in the smallest detail so as not to give the German troops an opportunity to destroy the city by subsequent resistance) decided that the right moment for the uprising had come.

Seeing the nervousness of the German troops — who were retreating in front of the Soviet offensive — as well as the hope and conviction of each Pole that Warsaw would be free, Bor-Komarovski gave the order that every Pole — from child to adult, young or old, man or woman — was to take arms and support the liberation of Warsaw and the expulsion of the Germans.

Many historians describe this uprising with a luxury of detail; some are for and some against it. The question still remains: Under similar circumstances, what would French, English, American or other rebels have done? Likewise, what would have been the decision of the commander of a nearby French, English, American or other army? But let us go to the facts.

On a September afternoon, all the inhabitants of Warsaw rose as one man against the German occupying forces. Each fought — with whatever he could get his hands on — to chase away the Germans and liberate Warsaw. The fight was unequal but determined. Whereas the Germans had modern arms, the inhabitants of Warsaw used improvised devices such as Molotov cocktails, stones, sticks and arms obtained or captured from the German troops.

On their side was the city of Warsaw and the night, which at the very beginning helped the rebels and created a great panic among the Germans, who thought that the Polish and Soviet regular armies were entering Warsaw with all their might.

In their panic, not knowing from which direction the enemy was coming, the German troops abandoned Warsaw under a hail of fire falling from every window at every street corner.

Of course, war has its own errors and every soldier is supposed to fight for his country, regardless of the means used,

with the only aim to defeat the enemy. The German troops suffered very heavy losses in men and materials, especially the units lodged all over Warsaw, quartered in scattered private houses. Surprised in panic and dispersed — of course, the great hatred of the Poles against the German occupation troops played a big part in this — many Germans were massacred. Had the German troops not been thus quartered, had they been in barracks or other military installations, the rebels would not have achieved what they did and the German troops would not have had too many losses.

In this historic moment of instantaneous victory, the population of Warsaw — after a life-and-death fight — was simply waiting for the Soviet troops to enter since the city was cleared and the Soviets had been spared significant losses due to this sacrifice made by the people of Warsaw. At the same time the Poles were showing the entire world that the Polish people fight for their freedom and do not wait to be liberated by the sacrifices of others.

But, upon being informed of the liberation of Warsaw through the uprising, the Soviet supreme commander did not take one single step forward. He was deliberately waiting to see what would happen next. What made the Soviets take this wait-and-see attitude?

The immediate intervention of the Soviet troops in order to occupy a city already liberated by its own inhabitants and about which the entire world was going to find out soon was not to Stalin's liking or to the liking of the Soviet commanders who had their troops right there, at the gates of the city. The laurel wreath of the victor had to be placed on the head of a Soviet and not on that of Bor-Komarovski, who was a Pole.

After abandoning Warsaw, the commander of the German army waited to see what was going to happen and prepared his countermeasures. Of course, he soon realized what the Soviet tactics were, especially because he had information that, in its great majority, the Polish Resistance was being financed by London. Realizing that the Soviets had no intention whatsoever of entering Warsaw, the German commander — after almost 72 hours of waiting — gave the order to retake the city. The German troops attacked with all their might, and any resistance was ruthlessly suppressed. Now the Germans started to pay back the Poles, which resulted in a horrible massacre under the complacent eyes of the Soviet army, which did not bother to intervene. Even the direct request for Stalin's help from the Prime

Minister of the Polish government in London, Mikolajczyk, could not bring any change in the Soviet army's attitude. On the contrary, the Soviets even abandoned their bridgehead across the Vistula.

Only much later, on January 17, 1945 — after four months — did the Soviet troops attack and occupy the Polish capital. This time the Soviets could show the entire world who was the true liberator of Warsaw! In the golden book of history they could now write about this great victory over the German troops. But every letter in this Soviet panegyric was dipped into the blood of tens of thousands of Poles fallen as a futile sacrifice to Soviet pride and megalomania.

These facts were told to me by a liaison man of Bor-Komarovski sent to the Soviet command to ask for help. He was detached and parachuted by orders of the Polish armed forces of the Polish government in London in a region of Poland controlled by the Polish Resistance. Because of this, the liaison man was detained by the Soviets and sentenced to 20 years' forced labor under the charge of spying for the English, article 58/6-1 in the Soviet law. Between 1953 and 1955 he was at Vorkuta, in Death Camp 11-9-10, and also at Potma, in Death Camp 11 in Iavas.

Because the Warsaw uprising was not in the least led or coordinated by the Soviet army command, the blame must lie — in the Soviet view — upon the rebels and the inhabitants of Warsaw and especially upon those who died fighting and can not defend their own point of view.

The Polish people will never forget this act of infamous treachery, and in due time history will make the Russians foot the unpaid bill.

One year before the death of the Minister of the Armed Forces of communist Romania, Leontin Salajan, on the occasion of the August 23 festivities — the day of "liberation" from the Nazis — the supreme commander of the Soviet armed forces sent a military mission to Romania to take part in the huge parade in Bucharest and to give to Salajan — as a sign of great honor — the banner of the Soviet military unit which had "liberated" Bucharest.

Salajan turned down the present from Moscow, with the words "Bucharest was liberated from the Nazi troops on August 23, 1944. The first Soviet soldier entered Bucharest on August 29, 1944."

In protest, the Soviet Military Mission left Bucharest and

went back to Moscow.

Was Bucharest showing its independence from Moscow or was it faking?

MARCH, 1953

Early in March, 1953, the Soviet radio stations broadcast the news that Uncle Joe was gravely ill, and on March 6, 1953, his death was officially announced.

I shall let others talk about the cause and manner of his death. Stalin's passing gave a general new hope. A new wind had to blow, and the breeze was already felt in the air. The Soviet leadership was taken by Malenkov, the same Malenkov who in November, 1942, on the eve of the Soviet offensive at Stalingrad, was standing motionless by Marshal Zhukov's side while the latter was saying to the soldiers: "I give you my word of honor as a Russian that I shall do whatever is possible so that you get your own land." In such moments, close relationships with old friends could not be forgotten, especially because now many things had to be changed and, as the saying goes, "Any beginning is difficult."

Was Zhukov going to keep his promise, especially now after being appointed Defense Minister of the Soviet Union, when the entire Russian nation was breathing more freely following the death of the dictator, when millions of people in Soviet death camps were waiting for a change because they could not take it any more? The Zhukovites were convinced that their time would soon come, the time when their idol would make his promise come true.

Under the marshal's command, the Soviet army began to be reorganized. However, at the same time, the K. G. B., together with all its auxiliary departments, was being put under the command of one man, the Minister of the Interior, Beria. The same Beria who had been Stalin's right hand; the same Beria who until 1946 or, more accurately, until 1953, kept digging Zhukov's grave.

Fate made it so that these two deadly enemies were in charge of the two main earthly forces in the Soviet Union. Embodying all the deeds of the dreaded K. G. B. (Cheka by the old name), Beria had total control of the Soviet state in his hands, but behind his back there was the indescribable hate and hostility of the majority of the population. Zhukov had the entire army behind him.

Through him, tradition and hope in a better life were going to be reborn because everyone knew that he would keep his promise.

The internal situation was very grave: The reins of the Soviet troika were divided, separated, and the people suffered.

During Stalin's last days, thousands of Ukrainians in the special-regimen camps at Norilsk (north of the Arctic Circle, in Siberia) started one of the biggest uprisings in the history of the Soviet state. Anything belonging to the K. G. B. or M. V. D. (Soviet Ministry of the Interior) was destroyed and their agents and representatives lynched. Only Stalin's death out-echoed the impact this uprising — whose price was paid in innocent and guilty blood from both sides — should have made all over the world.

From the rumors which had been circulating and from persons who by mere chance had escaped that terrible slaughter, it was learned that thousands of Ukrainians had been killed but that the Ukrainians, in their turn, had killed thousands of K. G. B. people and their families. The Ukrainians killed every person hired by the K. G. B. from among the prisoners, that is, every parasite who made a living by spying on the detainees. Only the soldiers drafted into the army were spared after promising that they would not take part in reprisals against the detainees. The details are not all known to me, but I know that there were many eyewitnesses who would not keep their mouths shut.

The Soviet collective and state farmer had been reduced to beggary a long time before. Thus among the farmers an uprising was also on the make and could erupt at any moment. All they needed was a new Pugachev to lead them, and the chain of uprisings could not have been stopped.

Under such circumstances, aware of the internal situation inherited from Uncle Joe, the Malenkov government issued a decree reducing the taxes imposed upon collective and state farmers by 60 per cent. At the same time, all debts of the Soviet citizens towards the Soviet state were cancelled. Through these measures, the Soviet peasants' imminent uprising, kindled by misery, was extinguished with the water of hope for tomorrow.

But what were the millions of political prisoners, prisoners of war, deportees and common offenders going to get? What hopes could they nourish?

UNDRESS, COMRADE CHIEF !

Following the March 30, 1953 amnesty for common criminals and offenders, many of these were released during the first hours of March 31, 1953. But to the great surprise of the Soviet authorities, only a few hours after the first common offender was released, the first thefts, break-ins and rapes were reported. All threads of the inquiry led to the criminals recently released through the generosity of the Kremlin's "benefactors," who thought that these criminals had already been reeducated.

Over 70 percent of those released during the first two days (March 30 and 31) were already rearrested by March 31 or April 1. Brought in front of a speedy tribunal, after a brief questioning, they received the old punishment and, in a few hours, were back in the same concentration camp from which they had just been released.

The political detainees could not be released. They were considered too dangerous for public opinion and especially for the Soviet state, whereas common criminals imprisoned in the camps, after a while, were considered by the Soviets as "re-educated."

A good friend of mine — Romanian by origin — who lived in the town of Vorkuta and had been released one month earlier from the camp after serving his sentence, told me about an incident which occurred right on the street where he lived, during the night of March 31, 1953, around 9 p. m.

The town of Vorkuta was caught in a construction fever. They were erecting new buildings and building streets by systematic planning, especially now when the economic importance of Vorkuta as a coal-mining center began to play the main tune in the Soviet economy.

The dark streets of the town of Vorkuta, poorly illuminated at night (I should say that night illumination was almost non-existent) were always avoided during the night by the townspeople because of the appearance of several roaming gangs of criminals — especially now when so many of these people had been released from camps.

After a rather tiring working day, a state prosecutor from Moscow — who had been sent to Vorkuta with the special mission of sorting out the files of those benefiting from the Soviet amnesty — tood a little walk along the lanes of Vorkuta.

From the distance one could see that the well-dressed prosecutor was a "greenhorn" in Vorkuta by the way he conducted himself, by the way he was dressed and especially by his daring wanderings through the dark lanes of the town. Anybody dressed in a new white fur coat, wearing clean white boots and an Astrakhan fur cap could not be an inhabitant of Vorkuta.

The walk could be pleasant and romantic but at the same time very dangerous for someone unfamiliar with the atmosphere of the town.

Reaching Trudovaya Street — a side street, badly illuminated — the comrade prosecutor came across three comrades coming from the opposite direction. After saluting him in a friendly manner, one of them asked him, "Comrade Chief, could you tell us what time it is?"

"Of course, with pleasure!" said the prosecutor. And unbuttoning his fur coat, he took out of his vest pocket a shining pocket watch tied to a gold chain and continued: "It is exactly 9 p. m.!"

One of the three walked up to him and said, "Thank you, Comrade Chief! Thank you again, but there is something else you should know." At this point, the fellow almost whispered in his ear: "Until 9 p. m. all the things you wear have been yours, Comrade Chief! From 9 p. m. on, your things belong to us. Come on, start undressing before I get mad!"

The prosecutor said, "Look, I am a prosecutor from Moscow! Do you realize what you are doing?"

One of the fellows said, "Look at him! He is a prosecutor! And on top of that he brags about it! You filth! Come on! You haven't undressed yet?"

In a few minutes, the comrade prosecutor — with the help of the other comrades — was undressed, left only in his shirt, underpants and socks, which he was lucky to have left. There was much snow in the streets, and the cold was rather bitter in this Arctic region.

After the three comrades disappeared in the darkness of the night, the comrade prosecutor knocked at the door of a house to get help.

For the first time, he entered a house where several families, together with former political detainees of different nationalities, lived together.

In a 3-by-4-meter (10-by-14-foot) room, three families lived together. (In other places there was even more crowding.) Right away, he was given something to put on temporarily, and until

someone notified the Soviet authorities, he could talk — person to person — to these "free people," former political prisoners who had served their sentence and done their duty towards the Soviet Union to extremes.

Before leaving his hosts, the prosecutor said that he was sorry about the big differentiation made between former political detainees and common criminals. He said he felt especially sorry because the latter had been released as "reeducated" people. He also promised that he would write a detailed report to his superiors about the reality of Vorkuta.

"Whether he kept his promise or not, I can't tell," said my friend. "One thing is sure, though: From now on he will look at the world with different eyes!"

Those who gave him shelter said: "Have a good trip, Comrade Prosecutor! And do not forget to tell the supreme chief of the K. G. B. the truth about Vorkuta!"

There was nothing unusual about these things because the person who headed the K. G. B. during Stalin's time was still in charge of it, and his name was Beria. This man, with a lot of experience, smiled amiably at his colleague in the ministry while preparing to send him on his last journey.

THE ARREST OF BERIA AND HIS ACCOMPLICES

June 26, 1953. The dawn brought new hope to the hearts of the detainees. Beria — the head of the K. G. B. — was arrested and everybody was amazed. Everyone wanted to know, to find out the circumstances in which the arrests had been made because, at the same time as Beria, there were mass arrests of thousands of K. G. B. officers. We did not have to wait long. In the next few days, T. A. S. S. — through some official declarations — gave us certain answers.

Very soon the first new shipments from Germany arrived: young Germans — students and workers — who had taken part in the June 17, 1953 uprising in Berlin, which was drowned in blood by the K. G. B. troops under Beria's command. Wasn't this the same Beria who after only 9 days was arrested as a traitor to the motherland? Why? And what did Beria do to get arrested?

At the same time as the shipment of the rebels from Berlin, the first rebels from Moscow began to arrive. The difference between them was that the former were children or young men whose mustaches were barely appearing whereas the latter were

all grown men, veteran members of the K. G. B. who had held higher or lower positions, all baptized with the holy water of the Kremlin.

It was interesting to notice that questioning did not last for a minimum of six months any more but only a few days. Besides the increased work load, the fulfillment of the tasks assigned proved the strenuous efforts made by the K. G. B. to report to the next plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Much had been written in the West about Beria's case and about the internal situation in the Soviet Union, before and after Beria's arrest. Even official persons wrote about this. As far as I am concerned, I shall render everything I know as it was told to me by persons directly involved in this case who — just a few weeks before their arrest — had had high supervisory positions extremely difficult to attain. When I met them, these people were simple, despicable fellows, sentenced to 25 years as traitors. Now, they were eating the same broth and the same bread I was eating.

Here is the statement of a superior officer in the Soviet Ministry of the Interior arrested — together with another fellow officer — on June 26, 1953. (Both officers were sentenced to 25 years as traitors to the Soviet motherland, on the basis of article 58/I-A. They arrived at Camp 7 around July 10 to 15, 1953.)

On June 26, 1953, at dawn, I was walking to my office at the Ministry of the Interior, the Special Department. I was wearing my K. G. B. uniform. At the corner of the street I saw a military vehicle, a "Gaz" model – a copy of the American jeep. Near the jeep, several soldiers and an officer from the army were smoking and chatting. All the soldiers had automatic weapons. When I got closer to them, they split into two groups, one on each side of the sidewalk. I had to pass through the corridor between them. As I was passing, one of them walked up to me and asked me to give him a light for his cigarette made of tobacco and newspaper. When I took the matches from the pocket of my trousers, I felt the barrel of an automatic in my back. One of the soldiers snatched my pistol from its holster. Then the officer walked up to me and said, laughing, "Do not attempt to resist! Get into that truck immediately. That's an order!"

When I tried to ask for an explanation, I felt the barrel of another automatic weapon in my rib cage, this time more brutally. After getting into the truck, I was forced to lie down on my face while my hands were shackled behind my back with American-type handcuffs.

At that moment I realized I was not the only one arrested. After me, they brought in three or four more officers – all from the K. G. B. We were taken to the Le Fortovskaya Military Prison. We were still lying face down, and the soldiers – without exchanging any words – were standing with their automatic weapons pointed at us. They had indeed the same shipment methods as our K. G. B.

After a few days of questioning, I was taken in front of a military tribunal which sentenced me for treason to the motherland, for rebellion against the Soviet state. These were the main charges against me and the others who had been arrested with me. All our attempts to defend ourselves were futile. What had in fact happened?

With Stalin's death, if the power of a Beria had been lost, the entire regime of terror and the entire strength of the Soviet state would have fallen from the pedestal on which the letters G. P. U., N. K. V. D. and later K. G. B. were written. Had this Soviet Secret Service broken down, the entire Soviet slave empire would have crumbled.

Consequently a civil war would have been inevitable. It was no wonder, therefore, that Malenkov approved – of course, upon Marshal Zhukov's advice – the choice of Beria as Minister of the Interior. The acceptance of a proposition made by Beria himself was very important: unification of all services of Soviet State Security into one single service under one command.

Two dangerous games were being played at the same time, and each of the power sharers was waiting to get the high cards so he could act and grab the entire political power for good. Beria wanted to continue the K. G. B. dictatorship – patterned after the old system – and to incorporate all the socialist states (such as Romania, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, East Germany, etc.) into the Soviet Union as Soviet republics. In their turn, Malenkov and Zhukov wanted to do the same thing in order to save what could be saved in the face of an eventual civil war which was appearing on the horizon.

In external matters, both these factions were conciliatory towards the West only as long as the Soviet armed forces were inferior or equal to the armed forces of the West.

But, at the same time, Beria realized that Zhukov did not and would not forgive him for humiliating him between 1946 and 1953 and that Malenkov would help Zhukov. Beria's thirst for absolute power drove him to action. The "X" day was set for June 26 – the date when Malenkov was supposed to pay an official or unofficial visit to Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria.

During all this time, Zhukov did not remain inactive. He gathered only trustworthy people around him and organized his personal intelligence service. Through this service, he found out Beria's detailed plan of action and especially the target date.

Zhukov tricked K. G. B. intelligence by organizing military maneuvers with trustworthy troops – all big units, motorized and under camouflage – which he brought around Moscow. Moreover, during those days, the marshal organized a series of secret meetings of his own intelligence service – just for show. At these meetings they kept beating about the bush and misleading Beria's vigilance.

Following a well-established plan, during the next days, a swarm of military trucks flooded the streets of Moscow. On June 26, at dawn, these trucks were stationed at preestablished checkpoints near the buildings which housed the K. G. B. officers, who were then arrested, put onto military trucks and taken where they least expected. Some of them were released after the sorting that took place. Anyway, in those days, the slogan was the following: "Whoever wears blue epaulets or a blue military cap is Beria's splinter!" As during the Revolution, "Death to the golden epaulets!" And some say that history does not repeat itself!

Beria was arrested with his entire retinue. To everyone's surprise, he was sentenced to death and executed. News of the execution was broadcast by radio in the afternoon of December 24, 1953, at 4 p. m. Some claim that Beria was executed shortly after his arrest. In the Soviet Union anything is possible!

To calm down hot spirits, the Soviet government made a capital mistake — both political and diplomatic — by publicizing, in the press and through the radio, the killing of Beria. The Soviets wanted a scapegoat for all past sacrileges. Beria and his men were declared guilty of the arrest, deportation, imprisonment or death of millions of innocent people throughout the huge Soviet empire.

Moreover, the Soviet press and radio publicized daily commentaries and statements through which the intentions of the Beria plot were revealed. The entire population of the Soviet Union was warned not to trust the directives launched by Beria and his splinters. The allusion to all the K. G. B. people was clear.

In other words, guilt for the fate of most of the 42 million political prisoners, war prisoners, deportees and common criminals — detained and traded like modern slaves in the twentieth century — belonged to the K. G. B., Beria and his followers! Had the Soviets indeed found the scapegoat for all sacrileges, or had the dead risen from the tombs asking for judgement? The mistake which the Soviet government did not think about when making statements about Beria and his accomplices was the chain reaction which would follow in these unfortunate people whom the Soviets were trying to take pity on right now.

Soviet law states that any citizen has the right to express all his grievances freely. Moreover, every Soviet citizen — says the same communist law — has a representative, elected by free vote, in the superior bodies of the state up to the Central Committee of the Communist Party. This clear logic implies that no major decision can be taken on an individual basis without the consent of the entire Central Committee. Logically speaking, it is not only Beria who bears the guilt for the crimes committed against the human being in the Soviet Union but the entire Central Committee of the Communist Party. The entire Central Committee, beginning with Lenin and ending with Gorbachev, must be held responsible.

At the Nuremberg trials, the Nazi government was sentenced by an international tribunal for the crimes committed in the Nazi concentration camps (among other things). But if, in 1946, the Nuremberg tribunal passed an exemplary sentence for Nazi Germany, one has the right to ask: When will a similar sentence be passed for the crimes committed by the Soviets in their own concentration camps?

In all statements made in the press and through television and radio regarding contingents of people and their nationality, it was never mentioned that, in the Soviet concentration camps or death camps (as they are often called), or in the forced deportation centers, there are foreign citizens, i. e., people who are not Soviet. How and when did these people arrive in the Soviet camps? Many of them had been confined there even before the outbreak of the First World War.

They say today that the West knows about the existence of the Soviet camps, even about all foreign citizens confined there, but is reluctant to reveal it. And if anything at all has been revealed, it has been done in such a way so as never to reach the ears of the free people.

There are documents which could prove that, while at

Nuremberg the Nazi government was being accused of deportations and branded as criminal, the Soviet government was deporting people from all the countries occupied by Soviet troops. The Soviets were blaming the defeated Nazis for what they themselves were doing — on a larger scale — in secrecy. Many of those sentenced by the Soviets after deportation were released as war prisoners. Why try to cover for one's crimes by using a legal term such as "prisoner of war"?

There are cases proving that the Soviet government deliberately resorted to forgery, Russifying the names of the great majority of people who — though unable to speak Russian — were officially made Soviet citizens and forced to sign statements to this effect.

If, years later, the respective person tried to contest the change of name, he was immediately shown the document in which he himself was requesting to be made a Soviet citizen.

The ID card of Valeria Barbulescu, whose name had been changed by the Soviets to Valeria Ivanovna Barbulescu. After her release from a camp, she was given forced residence around the camp. Vorkuta, June 20, 1953

An interesting point is the way the Soviets start their Russification campaign in an occupied country or province. For instance, in Bessarabia and Bukovina — grabbed from Romania — they started by replacing the Roman alphabet (in every institution and publication) with the Russian alphabet. Isn't this a crime against humanity and human rights?

THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF GREAT BRITAIN GIVES AN INTERVIEW

In the West, a multitude of international organizations were formed whose self-imposed aim was to look into the human-rights

issue and to demand respect for these rights. Amnesty International, the Organization of International Lawyers, and other organizations trumpet all over the world the "horrors" which have taken place in countries like Chile, Argentina, South Korea and some other parts of the world, but they are reluctant to talk about what is happening in the Soviet concentration camps as well as in many countries belonging to the Soviet bloc.

In case these organizations somehow intervene on behalf of someone suffering in the Soviet bloc, they do it only through a written request in order not to annoy the Kremlin too much.

The Soviet press is even more one-sided. It always writes about what happens in other parts of the world, but it never writes about what really happens in the Soviet Union. And — not to forget an important matter — memories are constantly being refreshed with the same articles (most of which are rewritten) about the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps.

In the summer of 1952, a rather minor event in the daily life of a free country (but important enough in the life of a Soviet citizen or in the life of those in Soviet concentration camps) caused amazement and remained an enigma for many: the publication of an entire interview with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Great Britain, Harold Morrison, on the front page of the Soviet newspapers *Pravda* and *Izvestia*. One should remember that Stalin was still alive at that time and that his tyrannical era was not yet over. What, in fact, was in this interview that caused such an uproar?

The editor-in-chief of *Izvestia* had asked the British Minister to grant him an interview. The Minister refused on grounds that in the Soviet Union all interviews, statements or discussions of political officials were reproduced in accordance with the directives of Soviet censorship, which is controlled by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The Soviet editor-in-chief, however, promised the British Foreign Minister that if he would grant the interview, it would be published in its entirety — without any cuts — on the front page of *Izvestia* and *Pravda*. Morrison agreed, and the Soviet editor kept his promise.

One day, several detainees were gathered in front of the wall gazette of the camp (near the "club"), reading and debating what was written in the newspaper posted there. Everyone was asking how many years in prison the editor-in-chief and those in Soviet censorship who had approved the publication of the interview would receive. How many times would the Soviet judge be compelled to pass a 25-year sentence for every word

which did not suit the Soviet system?

I can not reproduce the entire interview, but those curious to read it in its entirety would undoubtedly find it in the newspaper collections. I shall present just a few passages which I recall.

Question: "What is your opinion regarding the freedom of the Soviet citizen?"

Answer: "In England, when someone rings your door bell at dawn, you rush cheerfully to the door, knowing that your warm rolls, milk or mail has arrived, whereas in the Soviet Union the citizen trembles, aware that at this early hour there can be no one else but the K. G. B."

Question: "What can you tell us about criticism?"

Answer: "In England, everyone can criticize anyone, even a member of the government, without any repercussions; whereas in the Soviet Union, a single word not to the liking of the authorities – even if based on facts – can put a person behind bars."

And the interview continued in this vein. What I am describing here took place in the camp of Mine 7. The political officer in charge of the camp was K. G. B. Major Lieutenant Prokhurov. Seeing the detainees gathered in front of the wall gazette, Prokhurov walked up to them and asked them what the news was and why everyone was gathered there.

A funny fellow — one could find many like him in Soviet death camps — answered, winking at the other prisoners, "These capitalist crooks do tell the truth sometimes. Read and convince yourself!"

After reading the article, Prokhurov wanted to leave, but one of the men asked, "Well, Comrade Chief, what can you tell us? Is the wheel going to spin?"

"You are too stupid to understand such things," answered Prokhurov. Then he left.

An hour later, after the newspapers in the camp were confiscated, from that day on, no newspaper could be posted without being first read and then approved by the political officer. This means super-authority over authority over authority, that is, super-censorship over censorship and, again, over censorship.

The evolution of political events affecting the Soviet Union was changing from one day to another after Stalin's death, the Berlin uprising, Beria's arrest, the first political strike at Vorkuta, changes in the leadership of the ministries in the Kremlin, the overthrow of Malenkov, the fall of Bulganin, and the supreme power given to Khrushchev.

THE KHRUSHCHEV ERA

The Krushchev era was setting in. Marshal Zhukov kept his portfolio as Minister of Defense. The Russian people lost one of their idols — Malenkov — but Khrushchev won their sympathy by revealing Stalin's crimes, his terror and ruthless dictatorship. Everyone was hoping for a new, dignified life, especially in a victorious country. Everyone was hoping that, little by little, the time would come when Zhukov would keep his promise. But, instead, the day came when he was pushed aside without anybody knowing why.

A few days before his dismissal, Zhukov, in his capacity of Minister of Defense, paid an official visit to Tirana, the capital of Albania. On his way back, he stopped in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, where, among others invited to the official banquet given in his honor by the Defense Minister of Yugoslavia, there were the members of the diplomatic corps accredited in Belgrade. In the British diplomatic corps there were a few superior officers who knew the marshal from the time he was supreme commander of the Soviet occupation troops in Germany. Their reunion was very warm, but wicked tongues said that Zhukov became too friendly with his British friends, and that they went to some unknown place. At the same time, he gave an interview to a British journalist which was reprinted in the Romanian newspapers. Among other things, the journalist asked Zhukov if he was going to keep the promise given to his soldiers before the battle of Stalingrad.

The marshal answered, "According to the possibilities. I have always kept my word, and I shall always keep it!"

Many people read Zhukov's interview, but very few realized what that question and his answer meant! This is how history is written!

On his way back from Belgrade to Moscow, flying over Romanian territory, Zhukov, the Minister of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union, sent — from his plane — a greeting telegram to Leontin Salajan, the Minister of the Armed Forces of Romania, without knowing that very shortly after the plane entered Soviet air space, radio Moscow would broadcast his dismissal. That telegram was Zhukov's last official message. This is how a man who believed in something disappeared from the political and military scene in the Soviet Union. Afterwards, many paid

very dearly for their loyalty and attachment towards Zhukov.

The daily expectation of some improvement in our life — and this had been going on for years — caused a great many of us to lose hope of seeing the day when we could return to the bosoms of our families. Political crime against the state was considered an individual crime all over the Soviet Union. One knew he was still alive, but he did not know for how long. One could see what was happening today, but what about tomorrow? The political officers were satisfied only when the men worked hard, without hesitation. From time to time a hideous crime would spring up in order to instill fear in those unused to such customs. The political officers or commissars (as they used to be called) were also interested in defeating nationalism and patriotism, in accordance with the Marxist-Leninist theory of the class struggle, right here, in the country of Marxism, in the country of modern slavery. Therefore, it was no wonder that the political officers laughed and enjoyed themselves when entire groups of different nationalities warred among themselves. Very often, incidents of this sort had been carefully prepared in the K. G. B. centers in order to pick a hole in the coat of someone the K. G. B. feared. Through their intelligence service, which had spread like a spider's web, they sent and received all the information they needed. And they were interested in everything. Very often they planted moles in the groups which were trying to organize themselves. At the right moment, the entire group was unmasked, and one wondered where the K. G. B. had gotten all the information in the smallest detail.

As time passed, every detainee or prisoner realized that his freedom was linked to the outcome of a war which had to erupt between the Evil Empire of the Soviet Union and the great American Democracy; a war which, sooner or later, would become inevitable due to the Russians. Of course, those who knew the military and economic potential of the Soviet Union never thought that America would allow the Red Beast to lick his wounds, to strengthen itself by begging wheat and other supplies.

Consequently, everyone hoped for a war, and that war had the image of freedom. It was well known that the only ones who could subdue the Russians were the Americans! But it was also supposed that America would never sacrifice her own army for the sake of a few miserable millions of prisoners in the Soviet death camps though most of them had been imprisoned under charges of having spied for the Americans.

I shall explain how. In case the K. G. B. could not find you

guilty of any crime such as fighting against the Soviet Union, committing crimes against humanity, etc., it had to find a weak point in you through which they could prove that — at least once — you had opened your heart and praised the Americans by saying that, but for American arms, food, and clothing supplies, the Soviet Union would not have won the war against the Nazis. All this was sufficient to charge you as an "American spy," which would undoubtedly secure you — through a Soviet court — a 25-year sentence. Thus any prisoner had nothing to lose but his chains.

PROFESSOR STARNIKOV

A great Russian intellectual imprisoned in the death camps of Vorkuta was the university professor Starnikov. Between 1947 and 1948 he was in Death Camp 8 as head of the chemistry laboratory of the mine. He had been in captivity for over 10 years, and there was no hope for him to finish his sentence. He was a great Russian idealist, with an education received during the Tsar, but, at the same time, he was a convinced socialist through his own ideals. He talked too much as a free man, and the K. G. B. did not like it and, in a short period of time, they found a hole in his coat.

Before his arrest, he had made a trip to all the Western countries as a specialist and scientist in coal. He made the trip accompanied by his daughter while his wife was forced to stay behind, in Moscow. Countless times, in London, Paris, and New York, he was asked to defect after being assured of a secure position. He turned down any offer in spite of the fact that he did not agree with the Soviet system. He was Russian and loved his country as only a true Russian does.

The sequel of Professor Starnikov's story does not pay to be told. All I want to say is that one could never forget the fact that the K. G. B. took advantage of this man to the last pulse of his intellectual capacity.

As a consequence of the diverse and continuous influx of sentenced people towards the sites of Soviet strategic bases in the North, one could find all kinds of people in the Vorkuta death camps.

THE CHINESE

According to nationality, the majority of the prisoners were Ukrainian, most of them former freedom fighters charged with or suspected of playing a double role. The Ukrainians were followed by the Baltics (Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians), the Germans, the Poles, the Romanians, the Romanians from Bessarabia, the Romanians from Bukovina, the Romanians from Transnistria, and former prisoners of war sentenced for various reasons. For example, I came across some Finns who had been kept there since the time of the Soviet-Finnish war and had never been repatriated. I even met Chinese, some of whom were important people with very close ties with the leading circles of the Chinese Communist Party and government led by Mao Tse-Tung and Chou En-Lai. I recall the head of the laboratory of Mine 7 in Vorkuta — a Chinese, former editor-in-chief of the daily Chinese-language newspaper in Moscow, arrested in 1936 by the K. G. B. and sentenced to 15 years for anti-Soviet activities. The real reason for his arrest was that he had been the man of Mao Tse-Tung and of the Chinese Communist Party.

The irony of fate regarding this Chinese from Mao's entourage was that — so that he would not be found by eventual seekers — his name had been changed by the Soviet authorities to Pyotr Viktorovich Nemtsov.

After serving his full sentence, "Nemtsov" was set free but still kept under perpetual house arrest or forced residence somewhere around the concentration camp. He was working as head of a laboratory — a profession which he had learned while in camp. He was allowed to travel no further then the city of Vorkuta, where he immediately had to report to police headquarters to get a visa for a temporary stay in the city of Vorkuta. Usually, the visa had to be renewed every 24 hours.

I don't know what treatment the Soviets subjected him to, but, from the information gathered from 3 other detainees working under him — a Lithuanian, a Ukrainian, and a Romanian — who had known him closely and personally, I found out that he had a terrible fear of the K. G. B.

In the Vorkuta conglomerate, there were plenty of other Chinese, too — each with his own story and sentencing. Generally speaking, they were divided into two groups, each with its own China, regardless of the distance separating them from the two

Chinas. One group was with Mao, the other with Chiang Kai-Shek. Because their Chinese names were difficult to remember, the detainees nicknamed them according to each group: Those belonging to the Mao group were nicknamed Vanya, and those belonging to the Chiang group were nicknamed Sasha — two frequently used Russian diminutives.

The Chinese of these two groups had one main thing in common: They all complained about the rough treatment by the Soviets, who would keep them in the Soviet Union even after they had served their sentences. In general, the Chinese were hard working, wanting very little, and very thrifty, and because of these qualities they were the targets of all Russian common criminals and of the females of loose morals. Fully aware that they were not in demand unless something could be stolen from them, the Chinese themselves used to say with much Oriental bitterness and resignation, "Do you have money? Come here, Vanya!" (These words were accompanied by a movement of the hands showing a caress.) "You don't have money? Go away, Chinese dog!" (These words were accompanied by a gesture simulating a kick in the rump, expressing the disgust of the Russian profiteers and the rejection and bitterness of the Chinese.)

Generally speaking, in all Soviet concentration camps I had passed through, I came across many other Chinese Vanyas and Sashas, always and everywhere practicing exactly the same profession within the three basic quarters of any Soviet camp: bath, kitchen and laundry room.

VIVE LA FRANCE !

Representatives of a certain nation were more interesting than the Chinese, the Germans, the indigenous peoples, or other nationalities whose countries made up the future strategic bases planned by Beria and Stalin. I am referring to the French, in the entire diversity of cause and manner which brought them here, to the Arctic circle.

I have already given some details concerning some of them. I shall now go back and examine some of the most representative Frenchmen, and I shall complete the outline of this group, who were extremely heterogeneous in mentality, origin and preoccupation.

Because we are still talking about the French, I should like to say a word about the case of Colonel Jean Kostikov — a case

about which the communist, socialist, democratic, republican, and Gaullist gentlemen could not have too many additional words to say.

Colonel Jean Kostikov, an active-duty officer in the French army in 1917, had been a young underlieutenant of a former Russian Tsarist army which was part of the Russian expeditionary corps and fought alongside France against Germany. At the outbreak of the October Revolution in Russia, the Tsar absolved the Russian troops from their duty to fight against the Germans, and all Russian military stationed in France could go back home to Russia. Those who still wanted to fight, could remain in France and fight for the French until final victory. One of those who decided to stay and fight for France was Jean Kostikov.

After the end of the First World War, Jean Kostikov enlisted in the French Foreign Legion and afterwards joined the French colonial troops. During the Second World War, he did his duty — like any loyal Frenchman — until the final victory against the Germans. Decorated many times for bravery and dedication, Jean Kostikov, in his capacity of general-staff officer, attained the rank of colonel, and, for his distinguished service and dedication to France, he was given the position of head of the French Military Mission in Hanover (in the British occupation zone of Germany, after 1945). He spoke perfect French, English, German and, of course, Russian.

Towards the end of 1945, he was supposed to attend a meeting of the heads of the French, British and American military missions, somewhere in the neighborhood of the German city of Kassel (in the American occupation zone). One hour before leaving the French Military Mission, he received a telephone call, asking him to accept the invitation of the head of the American Military Mission in Hanover to make the trip together. Only thirty minutes after his acceptance, an American military car stopped right in front of the French Mission, and an American officer introduced himself to Colonel Kostikov, asking him to get into the car, and drive — to pick up the head of the American Mission — along a back road. Meanwhile, the adjutant of Colonel Kostikov could take the usual short cut, driving the car of the French Mission. Inside the closed American military car there were two other American officers. He sat down between them. The car then left Hanover, but instead of going south, it began to go east. Engaged in conversation, Kostikov did not realize which way the car was heading until it neared the demarcation line of the occupation zones. For Kostikov it was too late to

do anything. He was in the hands of Soviets disguised as American officers. He was especially stunned when the "American friends" started to talk to him in Russian and — once passed into the Soviet zone — to declare him a traitor to the Soviet motherland. Only now did he realize where he was.

A Soviet military tribunal sentenced him to 10 years. He was then confined in the Sachsenhausen Prison Camp near Berlin as a traitor to the Soviet motherland, whose subject he had never been.

They talk about the Sachsenhausen Prison only up to 1945, during the Third German Reich. They do not talk about this prison when it was under Soviet administration. Perhaps it is not allowed!

In March, 1950, Kostikov, 10 other French citizens (officers and civilians from the French administration in Germany), and a few hundred other detainees were loaded into a freight train and shipped to the Soviet Arctic region at Vorkuta. On their way, they stopped over in transit camps in Brest, Moscow, and Vologda.

Until 1953, Jean Kostikov was held in Death Camp 2, Mine 7, in Vorkuta, where he worked as head janitor in the barrack. Apparently he had been appointed to this position because one of his hands was crippled — a wound received during the war for the defense of France. From there Kostikov was shipped to Karaganda, in southern Siberia, where — I heard — he died.

I do not know what the French government did regarding the situation of this brave officer. At that time, the French army — in line with the strict legal formalism of the regulations — declared him a deserter. This was apparently an act of extraordinary clumsiness because the most elementary investigation would have led to the conclusion that Colonel Jean Kostikov remained totally French in his attitude during detention by the Soviets and was loyal to the honor code of the French officer corps.

Whereas the French government — motivated by petty politics — did not honor Kostikov's dedication to France, it is hardly believable, yet sadly true, that the French army could debase itself by the strictness of a legal formality, disregarding the dignity and conscience which Kostikov wore with pride along the years that passed. His attachment and love for France and all that was French could not — in spite of all Soviet promises — allow him to disavow France, a country and a people which he loved with all his heart.

But the day will come when those on the banks of the Seine will remember that many people devoted to France and to the French people died in the Soviet concentration camps, kidnapped and destroyed by the Soviet system. Everywhere Kostikov had passed, from Sachsenhausen to Vorkuta, you would find three words written on the walls of those prisons: "Vive la France!" "Vive la France!" was the immortal mark of French patriotism which led Kostikov through the immensity of the spiritual desert of communist Russia.

One day, together with Raymond Souillat from Paris (who had worked for the French Red Cross delegation in the Soviet zone and had been kidnapped by the K. G. B. in Berlin and sentenced under charges of "spying for the Americans") we were working to clear the snow from the railroad tracks north of our camp. It was "voluntary" work.

Souillat was to take part in the general strike in 1953 — without being charged (in the ensuing trial) — as representative of the French prisoners. In 1955, I would find him again in the death camp at Iavas, among a large group of Americans, Belgians and Dutch with whom he would be taken to Moscow. I was later vaguely informed that he had probably been shipped to France. Though he has not yet given any sign that he is around, in the depths of my soul I am convinced that he has not forgotten either me, "Ferry, the fool," or those days in the camp when the Gallic rooster (which I shall talk about later) was painted all over the tallest structures by the political prisoners and by the deportees in the zone of Mine 7.

Anyway, on the day when we were taken to clear the snow from the railroad tracks, we had with us the Armenian French Armand Maloumian, who — after going back to Soviet Armenia in 1947 — was arrested and sentenced for treason to the motherland and for . . . "spying for the Americans!"

While in the Soviet death camps, he almost ceased to believe that somewhere in the world, a man could have his own radio set, car, and personal airplane and — which seemed even more unbelievable — be able to take a trip anywhere in the world he wanted to. The whims of Paris and all the follies of life seemed to him now as unreal as the play of the faint colors displayed in the translucent streamers of the aurora borealis.

In spite of official restrictions, the guards and the prisoners from our camp stopped and talked to their counterparts from camps 12, 14, and 16 whom they met halfway while finishing the snow-clearing operation.

Eager for news, people talked endlessly. Since Souillat, Maloumian and Kostikov were with us, we asked if there were any Frenchmen among the prisoners from the other camps. And we found them. It was an entire group, that of Jacques Duclos. It was truly a surprise! Only the Soviets could put on such an incredible performance. The entire earth was taking part in the setting up of the strategic bases for the future military confrontation.

I knew very little about Jacques Duclos. All I heard then seemed to me highly confused, and even today I do not know what to believe.

From what those Frenchmen said — they all talked at the same time — I learned that they had collaborated with Duclos in a certain action for which they were subsequently sought by the United States and France. They took refuge in the Soviet zone in Germany, and from there they went to Moscow, where they were received with much pomp by the Soviet officials.

What they had done in France I did not know, but from what they told us — truth or fantasy — I got the picture. They were striving to explain to us how they, the Kremlin's men, had become the miserable prisoners and construction laborers of the Arctic Circle.

Received and catered to in a kingly manner, they were transported by official means of transportation and officially welcomed everywhere. They were shown Moscow, the Crimea, the Caucasus, and Kazakhstan. They were shown the factories and works of the Urals and the "millionaire" collective farms. Then they were introduced to the peasants and workers, and to experts in economic, political and social matters. They were indeed received with much warmth. They even discussed literature, arts and sciences with notable and courteous Russian people who — as they put it — deeply flattered their Gallic-Latin pride.

But although they were confirmed communists, they remained, first and foremost, French, and after so many official receptions and banquets (where they were always accompanied by male or female Russian representatives), they became sick of this suffocating courtesy. They wanted to be without an official schedule, to wander as they pleased, as on the banks of the Seine or along the highways of France. Their French curiosity was aroused especially when they noticed that — during the race of the train, automobile or airplane — not all the collective farms and the settlements looked like those officially presented to

them. Very often they suggested to their Soviet guides that they get off and visit other places and establishments than those on their itinerary. They were promised that they would be taken there at the first opportunity, but the occasion never came. Little by little they began to suspect something and, since they decided not to be fooled, they agreed among themselves to sneak out, without official company, who they thought surely were agents of Soviet counterintelligence. But every time they tried to leave the luxury hotel they were staying at, before they could get to the bus or subway stop, their guides always showed up as if out of nowhere. They played the game and pretended to be glad to come across them so they wouldn't get lost.

One day, after receiving their periodic money subsidy, 30 of their group of 57 succeeded in leaving their hotel in utmost secrecy and began to head toward one of the collective farms they had spotted a long time before.

They boarded a train and soon reached their destination, where they introduced themselves, of course, as the visiting French delegation. They were received with joy, but their hosts immediately called the districtual and then the headquarters in Moscow, asking for explanations as to why they had not been notified to prepare to receive the foreign delegation.

Finally the Frenchmen got the real picture and the game was over! They realized how things were on the "millionaire" collective farms and what the "free" socialist life was like. The obstacles that had been raised and everything their simple unexpected visit showed them, especially its consequences, fully enlightened them regarding the major farce that was being played here. Exactly as written — in their time — by Panait Istrati and Andre Gide, whom no one believed.

Towards evening they left for Moscow after drawing up a battle plan regarding the answers they would give to the inevitable questions. "We have smelt the Soviet system and adapted perfectly to the Soviet way of deceiving. We, too, were good on stage," one of the Frenchmen told us, half joking. But, to their surprise, they never got to Moscow as a group. One by one, they were picked up on the train and forced off at different stations. The last of them were picked up at a station in one of Moscow's suburbs. Consequently, the train arrived at the central railway station of the Soviet capital without them. Another kind of joy was in store for them, a joy which they could never have discovered at any official reception or in the French communist newspaper *L'Humanite*. Finally, they got acquainted with

the famous vans with fake windows on which names of diverse firms and products had been written — bread, fish, meat, etc. — and about which they had heard but did not yet believe. To put it briefly, their Moscow hosts had closed the visitors' register due to their desire to know, to find out. And Moscow does not want foreign noses smelling her broth or sneaking into her kitchen.

They were questioned one by one, then tried and sentenced in a group — according to article 1 and article 58, paragraph 6 — to 25 years at hard labor in Soviet camps. The charge was, of course, espionage.

Then we talked about Montmartre, the Champs Elysees, the Bois de Boulogne which they had abandoned after being blinded by Soviet propaganda. "You see," I interrupted their recollections about the Parisian places, "perhaps without this Soviet experience you would have remained some insignificant, purposeless beings all your lives — as so many dead bodies in Paris or elsewhere. The Arctic Circle will throw some light into your minds and you will be revived, gain courage and become useful to those you wanted to chain to the manger to which you yourselves were tied by Soviet propaganda. Sometimes even evil leads to good."

In the special camp at Oranky, near the city of Gorky, there were — besides the 2,000 German officers — approximately 800 Romanian officers, and a few dozen German diplomats (some with their families). The most important, however, seemed a small group of approximately 40 to 50 Spanish communists who did not believe anything they had read but only what they saw with their own eyes. Because of these, they were isolated from the others and were waiting for the result of the M. V. D. and K. G. B. questionings. All of them had been Communist-Party activists during the Civil War in Spain. Didn't Dolores Ibarruri know about them? I can't tell! All I can tell is that she could have helped them — if not by deed, then at least by advice. In the same way as German communist Wilhelm Pieck could have helped his son-in-law, arrested by the Soviets, sentenced, and then shipped to one of their death camps.

Perhaps these Spaniards were — later on — sentenced, too, to 25 years for spying for the same American imperialists, exactly like their French comrades.

Where did Fate take them? Does it pay to sacrifice one's life for an idea in which you have to believe blindly only to be destroyed when you open your eyes and protest, seeing the reality?

PATER JEAN NICOLAS

In the evening — barely arrived at the camp — I talked to Pater Jean (as some used to call him) or Nicolas (as others called him), former representative of France in Odessa and former special envoy to the Soviet Union with missions he never talked about. I told him everything I understood from the meeting with Jacques Duclos' Frenchmen, but even Pater Jean did not give me any explanations. As a matter of fact, I did not know very much about him though I was burning with curiosity to find out how an envoy on an official mission in the Soviet Union could be so easily arrested and forced to work for the reconstruction of a country he did not care about! Strange meaning of diplomatic relations in this century of ours! Strange boiling pot of Stalin's — this new Soviet order! Well, I think I had a good hunch regarding Pater Jean Nicolas, sentenced for spying for the French in connection with the Church and even the Vatican.

Pater Jean had been arrested on April 29, 1945. The war was not yet over, and the vanquished and the vanquishers were still dying on the battle fronts in Germany. The Russians were already spying on their allies, who reciprocated. Pater Jean had been arrested in Odessa. But what was he doing there? I don't know and I was not interested in finding out; therefore, I never asked. He was, of course, questioned in Moscow. The Soviets even found a spot for him — an ally (?!) — in the Lubyanka, the prison of sad renown. In those times it was a rare treat to be honored with an interrogation in Lubyanka Prison. It was overcrowded! New guests kept arriving from all over the empire and especially from the newly occupied countries where Moscow's "blessings" were given liberally.

Pater Jean Nicolas was tried and sentenced by the "Troika Tribunal" (or O. S. Court) to 8 years for espionage, on the basis of Article 58/6-1. Why? Because he was French, and France was a Soviet ally! Why only 8 years? Why didn't they give him capital punishment or 25 years, the maximum sentence? Because, and only because, they did not have proof. And the Russians are not shy when it comes to sentencing!

The way he looked after the misery, the beatings and near-starvation he had endured was deplorable. I think it never crossed his mind that he would survive the 8 years he had to serve. As

a matter of fact, he was not the first or the last case I came across. Weakened as he was, he did not succumb morally but always kept his pride as representative of the Gauls in the far North, at Vorkuta, where he had been sent to know and see what he did not want to. Camp 2, Mine 7 was the new address of this French priest. (Yes, Pater Jean Nicolas was a priest.) Did the Soviets inform Paris about Nicolas' change of residence from Lubyanka to Vorkuta, and of all its consequences?

But they don't talk about these things! Undoubtedly, Paris found out something about the real situation in Odessa, in the Ukraine, even about the real situation in the entire Soviet Union. Not from Pater Jean — arrested under charges of being a French spy — but from the Russians holding high positions at the K. G. B. headquarters on Bebel street in Odessa. Such was the case of former K. G. B. Colonel Dimitri Nikolaevich, originally from around Kaluga. Charged with treason to the motherland, supposedly for spying for the French, he had been sentenced to 25 years. How had this come about?

In the summer of 1946, he received the mission of contacting the French charge d'affaires in Odessa, who was buying wheat from the Ukraine for France. At that particular time, the Ukrainian population was dying of hunger. The Soviet government organized a gang of Komsomol youths who terrorized the Ukrainian peasants, forcing them to work on collective farms and turn in to the Soviet government every grain of wheat. The wheat thus gathered was shipped to France to support the candidacy of Leon Blum as president of that country. There were plenty of ships loaded with Soviet wheat in the port of Marseilles.

The political battle had to be won by Blum even if the Ukrainian peasants were dying of starvation. The Soviet government knew that the Americans would not help a communist France. Stalin gambled and, in exchange for the assurances of an electoral success of the Blum coalition, he promised — and he kept his promise — to send wheat to France exactly one day before the elections. By pulling the ropes behind the curtain, Blum became a winner. However, without the guaranteed shipment of Soviet wheat, Blum would have floated away like a leaf in the wind. Hoping to break a new ring in the chain of his capitalist enemies, through the victorious Leninist theory and the prestige of French revolutionism, Joseph Stalin further assured France that she would continue to receive Ukrainian wheat if she kept her mouth shut. But in only two weeks, Blum

finished his political career. Of course, the wheat had been sold for money and not given as charity. The price was extraordinarily cheap: 50 kilograms of wheat — grains in silk bags — cost less than one kilogram of bread on the Odessa black market! Some bargain, indeed!

Of course, those unloading the wheat at the port of Marseilles could not but admire the quality of the product and of the bags coming from the country of Uncle Joe, the father of the working class. Unfortunately, they were not aware of the sacrifices imposed upon the Ukrainian nation by the ruthless megalomaniacs in the Kremlin.

Dimitri Nikolaevich was a Russian and a convinced communist. I could say an ardent Leninist, but after he saw with his own eyes the death by starvation of the Ukrainian people who had fought alongside the Russians for the liberation of their country from the Germans, and then the selling of the wheat to a capitalist country which did not pay the proper price, his conscience rebelled. He complained to his superiors. Moreover, he sent a report to Moscow, telling the truth and convinced that he would succeed. However, the result was that he was declared a French spy and traitor to the Soviet motherland!

In 1954 he was working as an accountant in Mine 9-10 in Vorkuta. Great and wonderful are Thy ways, O, Lord, in the quagmire of Soviet life.

Speaking about Pater Jean or Brother Jean, what link could have existed between this educated priest (born and raised in France) and the Komsomol from the Arctic Circle? Obviously, the French need for wheat, Leon Blum and the plans for proletarian hegemony of Joseph Vissarionovich had to appear so that — through a secret complexity of circumstances — bent over a sheet of paper, Nicolas could draft the plans for a building, subsequently built exclusively by detainees and deportees, a building which the Soviet newspapers would present to the world as being the accomplishment of the Komsomol, north of the Arctic Circle, performed as voluntary work during the spare time of the Komsomol youngsters.

The building was at the center of the settlement built around Camp 2, in the region of Mine 7, and had been built through the sweat of thousands of people from all over the world, deprived of freedom by the Soviets under the most unexpected pretexts.

This small "palace of culture," built by people bitten by the frost of the North and stinking of the rancid fat of the seal or

walrus — which they used to spread over their hands and face if they could get it — has left, perhaps to this day, a few traces which will tell generations to come about those who were there and built the "palace of culture" but about whom the Soviet press has kept a significant silence.

Pater Jean Nicolas, French citizen, after his release from the Soviet death camps. Vorkuta, April 18, 1953

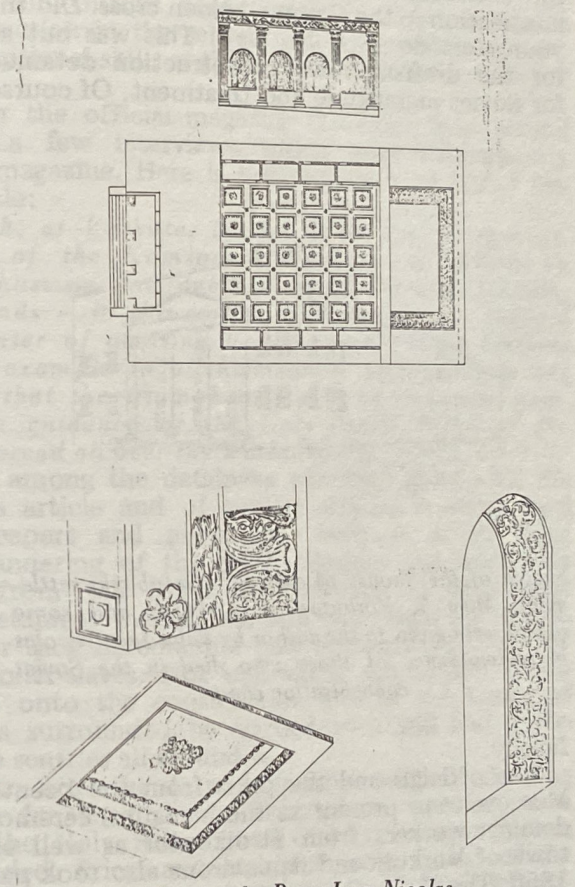
Perhaps the Soviets publicized the names of the "official" architects. In any case, the "unofficial" architects, i. e., those who had drafted the sketches of the building, were Pater Jean Nicolas, Ludwig Wolke (from the Luebeck region of Germany), Latvian student Ian Butshinish (who had attended the School of Fine Arts in Riga, capital of Latvia), and the Estonian Berzupe.

The exterior of the building followed the plans one hundred per cent. The club entrance had a frontispiece supported by 4 columns, 9 meters tall, like the entrance to an ancient Greek temple. Above the entrance, there was an ornament representing leaves of acanthus with coiled serpents. This was also on the sides of the building, where the windows of the library and dancing rooms had similar ornaments.

In charge of the construction work was engineer Alexander Alexandrovich, a Jew — a very intelligent and wise man — who was serving a 5-year sentence in the camp. After he agreed with Pater Jean regarding the change of the entire ornamental display, Pater Jean gave him a free hand to execute all ornaments as his imagination saw fit. Alexander Alexandrovich assumed responsibility towards the architect or, rather, towards the author of the project, regarding the proper execution of the entire job. The main purpose was that everything should come out all right,

beautiful, something as yet unseen in those places. This purpose was indeed accomplished.

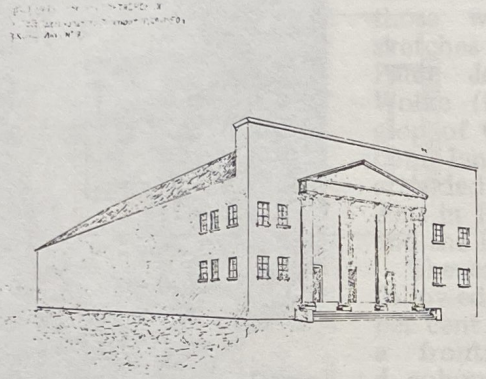
All the construction work was done by the political detainees from Camp 2, Mine 7, from the "Stroikontor" brigade. The interior of the performance hall had a capacity of almost 400 seats. The ceiling was exactly as in the sketch. The arches of the boxes and the proscenium enclosing the stage were also as in the sketch, but their ornamentation was somewhat sparse. Therefore, they were reshaped and remodeled and their ornamentation enriched by these modern slaves.



Sketches by Pater Jean Nicolas

Had the Soviets taken a closer look (or if they would take a closer look in the future) at the bas-relief around the stage inside the hall as well as in all the adjoining halls of the so-called house of culture, they would have found out that the ornamentation had duplicated the outlines of the faces and masks found on the Cathedral Notre Dame in Paris or other cathedrals in France, and that from place to place there was the image of the Gallic rooster.

This was the work of the Reverend Father Jean Nicolas. The other collaborators had the liberty of displaying their ornamenting talents on and around the main chandelier in the big hall. Above the chandelier could be clearly seen — with the help of some imagination — the German golden cross. Did the Soviet Komsomol youngsters do this? No way! This was but a small opportunity for the draftsmen and construction detainees to take revenge for Soviet ingratitude and treatment. Of course, there were Soviet and locally-inspired ornaments, too, but the others were skillfully disguised among them. The satisfaction of the detainees resided in the fact that they had accomplished something beautiful which gave them great pleasure. They, the miserable prisoners, could celebrate a small, final, artistic victory in the Soviet Union, where everything is planned and put in order officially.



Sketch of the "house of culture" (Octobirski settlement, Mine 7, Vorkuta). This sketch and some others were given to the author by Pater Jean Nicolas in remembrance of those who died in the Soviet concentration camps.

The officials and the press from the "center" and even from Moscow were present at the inaugural ceremony. Three hundred detainee-workers from Stroikontor as well as people from the town of Vorkuta and its environs also took part. It was August 5, 1950. The K. V. C. organization department from Camp 2 gave a variety concert. Reports and big speeches were not lacking, either. The delegate from Moscow, a fat, bald-headed colonel, said, among other things: "One must look far away, in all the corners of the Soviet Union, in order to find such a beautiful performance hall."

Three prisoners who had taken active part in the completion

of this complex cultural house received congratulations and praise (of course, with handshakes) — which would eventually be recorded in their files — from the Soviet officials. Upon the proposals of one of the officials, a memorandum was drawn up and addressed to the Gulag's headquarters in Moscow, asking for a one-year reduction in the sentence of some detainees who had displayed exceptional skills at this work. Of course, no answer ever came.

A reporter from the official magazine *Ogonyok* took several pictures and did a few interviews which were subsequently published in this magazine. Here is a summary — as best I can recall — of the article:

In the far North, at Vorkuta, in the Oktobirski settlement, young volunteers of the Komsomol organization, driven by their patriotic enthusiasm and devoted to the ideals of Lenin, with their own hands – in this corner of the country – erected a new cultural center of amazing beauty. Their work deserves to be used as an example to all Komsomol youngsters in our Soviet country so that the triumphant march of victorious communism under the guidance of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union will spread all over the world. (! ! !)

The indignation among the detainees was very great after the publication of this article and of similar articles in other local or regional newspapers and magazines, because of its lying impudence and slandering of the truth. Besides the work of a few electricians (from the town of Vorkuta), in their great majority former detainees themselves, not one single brick, nail, shovelful of dirt or sack of concrete had been lifted but by the hands of the prisoner-slaves. Not one single Komsomol youth ever put his foot onto the construction site of the house of culture, which was surrounded by barbed wire and had observation posts for the sentries all around it.

The Soviets, who are atheists and disavow religion, claiming that it is poison for the people, themselves appealed to a representative of the Holy See, a man of arts, because he was the man they needed. Priest and architect, connoisseur of the beautiful and of Western works of art, Nicolas was falsely arrested, convicted, and sentenced by the Soviets.

Pater Jean Nicolas was therefore the person to design for the Soviets, in the far North, the house of culture, the Soviet temple built by the hands of slaves. He was a Frenchman who knew French history and the structures erected by French architects for the Kings of his country. If they had done it for their Kings,

why shouldn't this Frenchman turned Soviet slave design and erect — of course, without pay — buildings for the new Red tsars in the Kremlin? All this to show the Russian people and the entire world the great cultural and technical progress achieved by the Soviets!

Just imagine that this had to be taken for granted by everyone. The multitude had to be duped. The world had to read and admire the ingenious Soviet presentation of their achievements! How could they be believed otherwise? If they themselves did not lie about whatever they do, then everything would go down the drain!

The team of amateur artists in Camp 3 were the eyewitnesses to that inauguration and the so-called festivities which made the Komsomol youngsters heroes overnight. I can not but laugh when I think who these Komsomol youngsters were in reality: a French priest sentenced for espionage; a Latvian and an Estonian sentenced as traitors to the motherland; plus a few hundred souls of slaves serving similar sentences. And the inauguration festivities were performed by Fritz Cloos, a Romanian of German descent (now residing in the Federal Republic of Germany). On the stage of the Komsomol club (north of the Arctic Circle), he sang a few arias from German operas plus a few Russian folk songs such as "Ten years pass without a lass/ Marina got a son, alas!/ Strange, strange, very strange," etc.

Pater Jean Nicolas was released from Camp 2 — after serving his sentence — on April 18, 1953. Today he lives a secluded life in his beloved France. His soul had the wonderful consolation of having the opportunity to leave the future generations from the North Pole an historic monument, a part of French civilization where civilization is entirely nonexistent.

RATS IN ATTACK

Some other trouble came upon us! The blizzard which used to bury us in the snow only to make us break our backs trying to clear it in order to make our life possible was not enough! But not only man complains about cold and misery. If the cricket in the fable could find food at the ant's, then the ant, too, had to grab from where her senses directed her. Well, we had been visited, not by ants, but by rats. They flooded our camp, and all our attempts to exterminate them proved fruitless before

their numbers, which increased instead of decreasing. This made us all think, the administration, the guards, and those serving their sentences. And miracle plants were found only in fairy tales. In this frozen tundra, some of our barracks were above the ground, on pillars driven deep into the earth, especially the storehouses, the warehouses and the kitchens. Underneath them was a thick layer of cinders, and around the projected line of their edges were trenches and ditches for drainage for the time when the ice started to melt and residual waters to flow. In the fall of 1951, the food received by the chef for the daily rations began to disappear. Searches were made — there were suspects — punishments were given out, changes were made but with no result whatsoever. The minced grains of wheat, the bran, the oats, the buckwheat — everything that was grain disappeared or was of lesser quantity, only a few hours after having been weighed and locked up in the presence of the political officer. The "thieves" were discovered only after a team of cooks and storage managers, punished with many days of confinement, were found not guilty.

The Russian chef at that time — nicknamed "the Baron" because some time ago he had been part of a spy group whose leader had been a German baron — told us that such a thing had never occurred either when he was a detainee or when he remained living here with forced residence.

Anyway, the chef set up traps, poison, tried device after device to catch the rats, but they multiplied faster than he and all of us together could exterminate them. We were indeed desperate.

One day, an old detainee showed up in front of the Baron and told him that he would do something about this and that there would be no rats around for a long time. But he wanted to be paid. They set the terms and agreed upon the deal.

"All I want is three meals a day to fill up my belly. Now I need some materials for the rats: a few traps (which they already had), 10 empty tin barrels open at one end; a removable cover — preferably made of glass so you could see through it — for the open end of each barrel; and some rancid bacon from the parcels of the Baltics!" (The Baltics — who enjoyed the reputation of being thrifty but very stingy — left their parcels with the camp or the post office store from where they hoped nobody could steal.)

The Baron shook the old detainee's hand, which meant that he agreed to his demands — the three meals a day included — as long as he was chef.

The old man set to work. First he used his rat traps to catch some live specimens which he needed for his witchcraft. In less than fifteen minutes, the ten traps caught the prey. Then he set down the ten tin barrels with the open ends up, and into each barrel he released five rats; then he covered the open top of the barrel with a glass board. Now, in each barrel he had five fellows under the glass cover through which both we and the camp guards took turns looking at them. The old detainee stirred our curiosity and at the same time offered us a show. The rats began to walk around in line, inside the barrel, on the bottom.

"Just be patient and you'll see the results of this contrivance," said the old detainee, undisturbed by our smiles and lack of confidence in his witchcraft.

Day after day, the rats continued to walk around in that circle of madness and starvation. Five or six days passed, and the rats were tired and tortured by hunger. Their walk acquired a slow rhythm. Suddenly four of the five gathered at the middle of the barrel bottom, head to head. The fifth — who apparently was weaker — moved in circles around them. The four seemed to share some secret. They were conspiring! The fifth rat tried to join the group but was bitten and chased away. This scene was repeated several times, but the fifth rodent was never accepted by the group. The conspiracy was on. They were plotting; their secret talk seemed to go on. Then a disgusting thing happened — like a streak of lightning: The four rats jumped the fifth, killed him and then ate him until there was nothing left. Exactly the same spectacle took place in all the ten barrels, the same behavior. And the experiment continued. The other rats were made to walk and starve. They, too, repeated the same kind of secret gathering. But the gatherings became smaller and smaller: The number was reduced to three rats, then to two. The performance lasted several days. Likewise our commentaries on what we were watching. The starved human beings on the Soviet side of the Arctic Circle watched a performance greater than any corrida, greater than the cock fights or bulldog fights.

Finally, in each of the ten barrels the strongest rat remained alive, and he was kept there until driven into a state of desperation.

Meanwhile, our wizard without a flute asked the chef to do something for him, namely to surround completely — with a frame of overlapping boards — the above-ground parts of the pillars on which the kitchens and the food stores stood. Then, at the base of this structure, four meters apart, small holes for

ventilation and for something else (the old detainee insisted he needed that, too) were cut. Lids could be placed on the small holes so they could be completely sealed from the outside.

"Finally the great show is going to be watched," said the old detainee to us. "Now I need your help! Take the barrels with the surviving rats, keep their glass covers on, and start hitting the barrels! Yell and make a lot of noise! This will scare the rats out of the kitchens and food stores. Then take the barrels, walk up to the small ventilation holes, put them with the lids against the holes, open the covers of the holes, then slide off the lids of the barrels and let the starving rats out and into the wooden frame built around the pillars. Then place the lids back on the ventilation holes and keep quiet.

"You will hear something awful, and then you will see something you will hardly believe. Have sticks, spades, and cudgels at hand — anything you can get your hands on — and be ready when the hordes rush out. Then, at my command, be ready to open the lids of the ventilation holes. But until that moment comes, the ten rats bewitched by me will do their job. Remember, this is the surest recipe to get rid of rats! It is a Soviet recipe!"

The old detainee's instructions were followed to the letter, and the ten starved rats were let loose through the ventilation holes and into the enclosed space underneath the storage and kitchen buildings. The holes were then immediately covered with the lids.

At first there were a few moments of silence. We were holding our breath. Then, all of a sudden, the ten rats — crazy from hunger, confinement in the barrels, the fights they had had among them and out of which they had escaped alive, and also from our noise — found their fellow rats and attacked them. A wild chase started in the empty spaces underneath the kitchen and storage houses. A cavalcade-like tramping and then squeakings could be heard. A general fight had started under the buildings, and the rats were biting and jumping one another in the dark which hid this fierce madness.

After ten or fifteen minutes, the old detainee yelled, "Get ready! Open the ventilation lids! Get your cudgels handy and hit as hard as you can! Hit and chase and you'll have no more rats! You'll see some rout! Now!"

Through the suddenly opened ventilation holes, thousands of terrifed rats gushed out. We began to hit them at random, as hard as we could. They came out wave after crazy wave, crossing the yard of the camp in a desperate race with jumps,

through the barbed wire, over and around the sentries' huts past the far-away dwellings of those not in the camp, and towards the open fields.

Uncle Verdes, a jolly old man, a Romanian from Bessarabia (who from 1936 up to that time had rambled through almost all the concentration camps in Soviet Siberia and lately was being sent to reconstruction work camps for future strategic military bases) said to me, "People act in the same way!" My old friend Verdes, whom I have mentioned before, had seen a lot of things, endured sufferings, enough for not just one but seven lives, but he still kept his sense of humor alongside bitterness. He continued: "Yes, my lad, people act exactly in the same way! All people I've come across did. The strongest always attacks! You saw with your own eyes how things went inside those barrels! What an old fox this man with the rats! Exactly like man, the hungry rats jumped the weakest! And since there were four stronger ones, they jumped the weaker one together at the same time. This seems to be the law. The rat — starved and crazy because of desperation — is not an ordinary rat any more. Likewise man is not man any more but a rat turned wild. Did you watch the last two rats before they started to fight: How they watched one another and followed one another until the one who felt stronger decided to attack? And when the ten rats were let loose under the storerooms, did you watch what they were able to do? What horror! What panic! What hell! O, God! And when you lifted the lids of the ventilation holes and let them out, it seemed to me that they saw the devils which entered the pigs — mentioned by Saint Matthew — which ran away and threw themselves into the sea."

My old friend crossed himself, spat to the side, and left grumbling to himself, perhaps angry at his life which had been all wasted in Soviet camps.

Talking about Uncle Verdes, I recalled that it was from him that I had found out that Pater Jean Nicolas (or Brother Jean) — the main architect of the Soviet cultural house mentioned before — released at the beginning of 1953 but detained by the Soviets for another year at Vorkuta as a forced resident, spoke (among others) my own language (Romanian), and way back after he was sent on certain missions to Romania, he had become a member of the college of priests in Blaj as a teacher of French.

Also from Uncle Verdes I found out later on that Pater Jean Nicolas had bought a trunk full of clothing in the Vorkuta

market — things worn at the North Pole and of immediate and private use. Asked by the K. G. B. agents who had noticed his shopping, the French Jesuit priest told them in a grave voice that he had bought the things with the special intention of showing them to the unprovided-for French workers, i. e., to prove to them what fine wear they had in the Soviet Union and how cheap and practical it was!

To end the story about this French missionary, I should like to add that he used to receive different parcels through the mail, even from Odessa and Kharkov, inside the Soviet Union, parcels whose contents he shared with the detainees. He never made confessions to anybody, but in his days of vacillation he always mentioned "God's Army."

Approximately one year after the staging of the fight with the rats, I unexpectedly heard that Pater Jean — though French by origin — had left on an airplane bound for Vatican City. The same would happen later on with Father Pietro Leoni. Like Father Leoni, he is also apparently seized by a fit of silence. We hoped that somewhere and some time he would let his "shopping bag" explode and start writing the history of those without a history, like, for instance, the history of the Hungarian group connected to the highways in Hungary, a group which Pater Jean, Father Leoni, Roenecke and Fritz Cloos met at Vorkuta (if not under the name quoted above, then under that of the "group of young Hungarians," who were completely apart and had no involvement whatsoever with the prisoners of war or the Hungarian gendarmes involved in crimes against humanity or other events related to the war.

I am referring to a group of over 140 young Magyars deported from their own country and spread over the strategic vastness of the Soviet industrial bases. What grave sins had the K. G. B. discovered to justify the arrest and deportation of such a group?

THE GROUP OF YOUNG HUNGARIANS

Around 1947 or 1948, that is, late after the signing of the peace treaty with Hungary, an American consortium proposed to the Hungarian state a plan of reconstruction of all the roads and highways in Hungary. The proposal stipulated that payment for the work was to be made in 15 years from the start of the project, that the work itself would be finished in 3 years, and that all tools and machinery brought over and used would remain

the property of the Hungarian state.

Among other clauses I recall was the one referring to the question of interest on the capital invested by the Americans. Instead of interest, the consortium requested a guarantee that for 15 years — until the date of payment — American-made gasoline would be sold on all roads and highways in Hungary.

The Hungarian government at that time was divided into two groups professing different opinions, but the last word was that of the Soviet advisors, who categorically opposed such transactions with the United States.

All those whose hearts still beat for the fate of Hungary and of the Hungarian people; all those who had weighed with love and concern the objective, real needs of Hungary could not but see the immense advantage offered by the American proposal. A defeated country, a country terribly ravaged by the war, poor for the time being and without any chance to rebuild its economic structure, Hungary had every imaginable need to heal her wounds. And no one could have made a more profitable offer for Hungary. As for the Hungarian state, deeply indebted and defeated, it could not even dream of such large-scale work. All the employees of the new Hungary — high- and low-ranking officers, many of the people from the political apparatus and state security, jurists, teachers and priests — all supported the American offer. It was a unique opportunity for Hungary to build her modern highways, which would have invigorated commerce with the Balkans and the East, assuring her an important part in European negotiations. "The 15 years will pass quickly, and the highways as well as the American equipment will remain," claimed the group of the best Hungarians.

Following the disclosure of the rejection of the American offer, people decided to stage demonstrations to force the Hungarian Parliament to repeal the decision of the Soviet advisors who had no right to decide matters so vital to Hungarian economics and life. In case the Soviets were to intervene and prevent any demonstration from taking place, the organizers took steps to expand their activities all over Hungary and not only in Budapest, where they could have been silenced. To prevent a Soviet armed intervention, the Hungarians began to disrupt any means of transportation by rail especially towards Romania and the Soviet Union. To prevent speedy repairs of the railways, the Hungarians took all the emergency materials — such as points made of special steel — from the storage houses of the Hungarian National Railway (M. A. V.) and placed them

in secure hiding places.

But, as sometimes happens in such cases, someone betrayed this undertaking and thus gave the K. G. B. the chance to arrest all organizers, one at a time, picking them up from a list. During that time, the young Hungarian cadets (the majority of them graduates of the 1945 class) managed to get guns, and the officers from the Hungarian police, who had discovered the German secret depots of arms, turned over to the Soviets only an insignificant part of these weapons. They had impressive stockpiles of arms and ammunition which they kept hidden in different places at the disposal of the organizers of this defensive operation if the need had arisen.

Because the turncoat did not know — by mere chance — about the existence of these caches and about many other details of the operation, he could not tell the Soviets everything. Thus, in Hungary, these secret arms remained in their secret places, to be used for another occasion which — as we all know — came about later. The Soviets now know about it as well as the "business-minded" Karoly Grosz.

In spite of the treason, the K. G. B. could not arrest more than 140 young people — between 20 and 25 years of age — and discovered only a small cache of arms. Those arrested were not questioned in Hungary but were shipped in Soviet military trucks, first to Vienna and then to Moscow. Along the road, due to the imbecility of the guards, those arrested were able to arrive at a consensus regarding their future statements and to transmit the key information to other Hungarian patriots. Included in this shipment was the Catholic priest Father Harangozo.

I spent much time in Camp 2, Mine 7, among the deported Hungarians. Now I could speak their language well, and they appreciated and trusted me. I was taking part in their talks and was aware of their intentions. Each of them took it upon himself to learn by heart the names and addresses of the secret service officers who had arrested and beaten them, as well as the names of their relatives, and those of all informers and witnesses who had not been present at the trial but had signed statements on file in Moscow.

Though weakened and decimated by diseases and by Soviet treatment, these Hungarians had very high morale and were convinced that they would get back home where the secret arms depots were waiting for them. Revenge was stuck in their minds like a fishbone in the throat, and they swore not to forget it

when the day would come.

I could not state precisely how much of the Hungarian rebellion against the Soviets in 1956 -- one year after these Hungarians departed from the Soviet Union — was the result of the oaths which I had heard with my own ears in Camp 2; but from the Hungarian press and the "White Book" of the Hungarian government, I understood that some of those who returned from the Soviet Union fulfilled their oath towards those who had died in the frozen tundra of the Arctic Circle.

UNCLE FERRY

Generally speaking, in concentration camps and elsewhere in their country, in order to maintain their supremacy, the K. G. B. did exactly what they accused England and France of doing in their colonies. They incited people against each other through paid agents-provocateurs. But time made people smarter and wiser. The Soviet farce and maneuvering became a cheap game for most people, who by now had become very cautious and suspicious. Therefore, Hungarian solidarity could not be undermined.

I know of cases in Death Camp 7074 where most fervently patriotic Hungarians — who were raging against the Soviets and their methods — consciously and deliberately joined the most treacherous Hungarians in the paramilitary unit sponsored by the Soviet government so they could trick the Soviets regarding their future intentions and give the impression of a deep split among Hungarians. (Through coercive methods, blackmail, terror, and promises of rewards, the Soviets force civilian and military prisoners from the occupied countries to form so-called volunteer paramilitary units to fight against their own nations. These units are always placed in the front line, in front of regular Soviet units equipped with better weapons and ready to kill them in case of rebellion.)

"We must keep our unity secret!" a Hungarian friend told me after I had condemned him for agreeing to join this unit. "The Soviets must not see what we really are and who is against them. Let them think that I am a prostitute because I joined their prostitutes. But they'll never know that I am different and that I am ready to attack them when the time comes!"

The Soviets tried to incite the sub-Carpathian Ukrainians and the Romanians against the Hungarians and vice-versa, but

they did not succeed. On the contrary, I recall with awe the violent outburst of the Hungarian group when a Romanian prisoner was beaten up by one of the Soviet commissars on duty.

I can not forget — in spite of my former aversion towards the Hungarian language — the act of utmost courtesy of the group of Hungarian officers who — one day at dawn, when most of the prisoners were still asleep (I think it was January 24) — improvised a choir and a heart-breaking orchestra and, in a quiet manner, gave a concert-serenade of Romanian music which woke up the Romanians — the centuries-old enemies of the Hungarians — who were pleasantly surprised.

When and where the Hungarian officers learned and rehearsed the Romanian music, amidst that hellish crowding of people in the camp, without being heard is still a mystery to me! In such a display of feelings, there is something which ennobles and overwhelms man! Camp 7074 on the Valdai Plateau and Camp 2 in Vorkuta had a special history for the life of many detainees.

Evangelical priest Sandor Borocz, a martyr of faith

Few people can forget Joseph Galambos, Hungarian Catholic priest in Vorkuta; or Sandor Borocz, Hungarian Evangelist priest and martyr of faith, who knew how to set aside misunderstandings linked to their specific Christian denominations and to convince their brothers in misfortune to avoid any cheap incidents out of convictions coming from Heaven. These priests patiently and persistently organized a true social-assistance program among their own nationals — hungry as they themselves were. Every 10 days, out of his 14-gram daily ration, each Hungarian detainee or prisoner gave up two teaspoonfuls of sugar which went to the sick selected by our physicians for extra feeding.

Years of want coupled with Soviet oppression made some people crazy. They turned wild exactly like the aforementioned wild rats in the barrels. But there were people who rose above wants and understood the simple meaning of the game of life. Against this kind of people, the infamous and sophisticated game of the Soviets made no gains or crumbled. The true winners in this game were those who knew how to lose. And we learned this secret. The K. G. B. made us finally understand the simple

things.

I can not end this episode dedicated to this group of Hungarians — honest and courteous — in the camp of Vorkuta and in Camp 7074, without recalling Uncle Ferry (his true name was Ferenc Barasics). My own nickname — Ferry — was given to me in association with his name. He was 60 years old, had just one testicle, and in his mouth he had only two teeth — one in the upper jaw, the other in the lower. This old man had such a youthful disposition that he used to quicken everything around him. He played soccer, threw weights, jumped onto a table without touching it with his hands, made wagers on any performance and always used to win. Anything he won -- cigarettes, *mahorka*, a piece of bacon, bread or some sugar — he took to the sick detainees in the improvised hospital.

At his 60 years, he was capable of any effort and any prank designed to spread good disposition around him. From the way he was built and from his muscles — even at his age — one could see that he was the champion of Hungary at freestyle wrestling.

He could not stand to be called "old man," and he used to get angry when anyone called him that. He had a soft spot in his heart for me and always watched me as if he wanted to protect me. I could never find out why this jolly fellow was at the Arctic Circle.

One day he was taken out of Vorkuta, but in a short while I saw him again at Iavas, where I watched him bet. One day, a huge common criminal collided with him while leaving the camp kitchen. The hulk yelled at him, "Are you blind, old man? Didn't you see me coming?"

"Don't call me an old man! As big as you are, I can finish you off in a few seconds!"

"Wise guy!" the criminal said.

"Do you want to bet?" asked Uncle Ferry.

"With what?" asked the criminal.

"With your clothes, that is, on everything you have on you. If you win, I'll give you everything I have on me!" said Ferry.

They shook hands, then grappled, clasped each others' bodies tightly, and in a few seconds the hulk was lying on his back.

Uncle Ferry won, took the hulk's clothes — he did not forgive him — and left him naked as his mother had made him.

Right here, on the occasion of our last encounter at Iavas, Uncle Ferry — when we came to talk about Vorkuta and the killing of the rats — told me a few details about the past of the chef, the Baron, which he had found out from one who had enlisted in General Vlasov's army, which rose against the Soviets and sided with the Germans. The Baron had worked in the German intelligence service led by Hans Heinrich Gerhardt, baron von Bittenfeld. His punishment, which he was serving at the Arctic Circle, as well as his nickname, came from this kind of association.

THE KEY WITNESS SHOWS UP

Since we are still at Iavas, it is worth mentioning — for history's record — that it was here that a detainee disappeared (after being brought from some other concentration camp at the Arctic Circle) who had been one of the Russian-language interpreters of von Ribbentrop during the talks and at the signing of the nonaggression treaty between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, in August, 1939. The interpreter was Dr. Erich Sommer, a German from the Baltics, repatriated to Germany from Riga, and later held by the Soviets in the Abis Prison. This man was expressly sought so that he could give testimony at the Nuremberg trials, but nobody knew his whereabouts. When the Soviet representatives were asked about him, they shrugged their shoulders, and the Soviet press agency, T. A. S. S., categorically denied the rumors that this interpreter was in one of the Soviet prisons. Why did the Soviets lie when they knew that Sommer was — at that time — somewhere around the Soviet city of Arkhangelsk? Why didn't the Soviets bring this interpreter to the "righteous trial" at Nuremberg? Did he know too much?

Here, in Camp 11 at Iavas, this interpreter began to talk. He talked about the plot to divide Europe. Among other things, I recall the partition of Romania between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union: The Romanian provinces of Bukovina, Bessarabia, the Danube Delta, the entire territory of Dobrudja and the seacoast were to become incorporated into the Soviet Union.

Did the Soviets hide this interpreter for such a long time and with such precaution because they did not want to be exposed?

Soviet officers coming from the same camp told us that in the Arkhangelsk camp the Soviets also had imprisoned Rokossovsky before he had been made marshal of the Soviet Union and before the outbreak of the war with Germany.

Finally, a Luftwaffe captain — named Richter, if I am not mistaken — came from Camp 29. He had flown the Nazi secret

archives (currency, secret patents, and other valuables) from Berlin to Madrid, during the days before the fall of Nazi Germany. During his last flight, a case was damaged, and its contents poured out. When he saw them, he immediately realized the value of the shipment entrusted to him.

He told us that, on his way back to Germany, while he was flying over the airport at Lichtenfeld and asking permission to land, after clearance was granted, the antiaircraft guns opened fire, hit him, and brought him down. He was convinced that it had been the Russians who had shot him down because it was they who made him a prisoner and took him immediately to Moscow and then to some concentration camps in the North.

Later on, he was told that it was the Nazis who had shot him down but could not catch him before the Russians did. The Nazis knew about his secret cargo and figured it was better to shut his mouth forever so that he could not testify about matters which were to be kept secret.

THE BULGARIANS

There was news — for those warned and those not warned — coming directly from the Soviet death camps in Krasnoiarsky Krai, Siberia. In Camp 7, in Kraslag, Dr. Sigmund Mannheim (a Czech by origin) worked as a physician and radiologist in the zone for tuberculosis patients. For over 16 years, Dr. Mannheim had been trying to survive in that Soviet death camp. After the occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Nazis, he took refuge in Poland, in the so-called Western Ukraine. With the outbreak of Nazi-Soviet hostilities (after the joint occupation of Poland by Nazi and Soviet troops), Mannheim was arrested by the K. G. B. as a foreigner and sentenced by the same for spying for the imperialists. The charges against him were easy to invent since he had attended a university in the West.

It was 1955. Foreigners imprisoned by the Soviets hoped for a repatriation decree. As a Czech, Mannheim nurtured the same hope: That the day would come when he would celebrate his release on his own street, the same hope which had helped him survive during the most terrible years in the history of Soviet concentration camps.

Another foreigner — in the same camp, during the same period of time — was the Bulgarian Popov. He was one of the three Bulgarians accused at the Leipzig trial in Germany, in 1933,

of setting fire to the Reichstag. At the same time, charges had also been brought against Taniev and Gheorghi Mikhailovich Dimitrov (the future Secretary General of the Bulgarian Communist Party after 1945).

Dimitrov died later on after a suspicious treatment in a Soviet special clinic in the Crimea. The gossip goes that, as soon as a satellite-party official does not follow the Kremlin's directions, he has to be "treated" in the Crimea. Many politicians devoted to Moscow breathed their last after such treatments. Anyway, this is their business. Let them mend their own fences since they got into trouble themselves. Perhaps tomorrow the location of the clinic will be changed to Managua or Havana.

Taniev followed a road unknown to me. Popov — who had the gift of contradicting people — was arrested on the occasion of one of those customary political purges. (A method devised by Uncle Joe and faithfully applied by the K. G. B.) Accused of being a reactionary, Popov was sentenced by the O. S. Court (the "Troika Tribunal"). Any sentencing by this special court could be extended indefinitely without any other trial.

In the spring of 1955, Popov was transferred to a special-regimen camp in northern Siberia. Before leaving for his new destination, he was examined by Dr. Skoblo (originally from Leningrad and former political detainee for 9 years, now released but detained with forced residence). The medical check-up was specially ordered by the K. G. B. to attest to the condition of Popov's health and to record it in his file. The washing of the hands!

I never heard anything else about their fate. Perhaps these few significant details recorded here and then linked to others by people who know more, will some day throw more light onto the consciously or unconsciously created chaos of those years!

GENERAL MATEICH

Among the thousands of detainees populating the Soviet death camps, from one end of the huge empire to the other, were a number of army generals. In the first years after the war, the Soviets did not differentiate much among prisoners and placed all of them in the same camps, giving them broth from the same cauldron. In Bautzen I had met an entire battalion of German soldiers without officers. Obviously, His Majesty's

government needed the German officers in Great Britain because they were walking freely over there! But here, in the Soviet camps, everyone was treated in the same manner. The Soviets made some exceptions, of course, but only for those who had shamelessly sold their consciences as human beings and most likely their consciences as military officers for a bowl of broth or *kasha*. I hate to recall their names. But how did some of these generals behave, and how were they respected in the Soviet camps by their former subordinates?

The general of the Yugoslavian *Ustashi*, Mateich, had been arrested in Romania, in 1947. He was questioned by the K. G. B. in the Romanian city of Constantza in a former prison for Turkish prisoners of war. His nickname was Matei. The Soviets did not hand him over to Marshal Tito but sentenced him like an enemy who had fought alongside the Germans in Yugoslavia against Tito and his allies. General Mateich had an additional charge: an article for spying for the English and the Americans. This charge actually completed all the blank spots in his file.

Together with many Romanians under similar charges, General Mateich was put into a train car labeled "scrap iron" and taken across the border into the Soviet Union. The death camp and the base where Mateich was to serve his sentence were in Novaya Zemlya.

Since the K. G. B. in Constantza, Romania, did not succeed in breaking this stubborn, proud general, the Soviets thought that the rough polar climate would make him soft and humble. But neither the "reeducation" camps in Novaya Zemlya nor the thousands of common criminals specially gathered in these northern islands could make him change his dignified attitude. It was one of the few cases where a sentenced detainee like him did not talk or answer the questions put by Soviet officers or soldiers — regardless of their position in the administrative hierarchy of the camps or prisons — unless the latter stood at attention in front of him.

"I am General Mateich. I had hundreds of subordinates like you. Only by showing respect to my rank, will you show respect to yourselves," he used to say. With these words he cut off any further talk with the Soviet supervisors.

In 1955, we met him in the transition camps in Balkova and later on in Potma, in Camp 18.

Only later, in 1955, did the Russians consider handing over General Mateich to the Yugoslav authorities in spite of the fact that Tito had long since lost the sympathy of the Kremlin and

could be seen all over — in the papers, magazines and on signs — caricatured as "the butcher of the Yugoslav people," carrying in his hands an ax stained with blood.

I think no other general ever gave the Russians so many headaches (especially because he spoke fluent Russian), and I also think that the Russians were glad to get rid of him. What subsequently happened to him I could not find out. I would not have been surprised if the Russians had given him a pension! Mateich had a lot of information concerning the atrocities committed by Tito's communist partisans against the indigenous population of German and Hungarian descent. He could talk about this for days, giving out names, data, localities, and naming persons as if he were an encyclopedia. Because his information would constitute too much of a digression from this chronicle, I shall get back to it upon another occasion and in due time.

GENERAL TRAIAN STANESCU

The roar of the cannons and the heat of the fighting were not yet over on the front at Stalingrad when the Romanian General Traian Stanescu entered the headquarters of his staff and said to the Romanian military officers, "Gentlemen, the German troops have been defeated, our retreat has been cut off on a line dozens of kilometers long, and sacrifice is useless!"

At least these are the words which the Soviet actor — playing the part of Stanescu — utters in the Soviet film "The Battle of Stalingrad."

The truth is, indeed, that Stanescu surrendered together with all his troops, saving them from a sure and futile death. He then became a prisoner in dozens of Soviet camps and had been made hundreds of proposals to collaborate with the Soviets in the camps and eventually in Romania later on, but he categorically refused. "I am too old and sick, and it does not make any sense for me, gentlemen," he used to tell those who kept pushing him. He did not do physical work in the camp because of his rather advanced age, and he did not lose his morale or succumb to Soviet pressure as others did. He showed respect to others in order to be shown respect, and nobody, not even the common criminals, ever disturbed him.

In 1955, he arrived in Death Camp 11, at Iavas, in the Potma region and received a hero's welcome in the circle of the

Romanians. He felt very good in the midst of the Romanian prisoners, and he always enjoyed telling stories from the lives of those he had met in the Soviet camps. He was interested in the present and the future of these people. About himself, he never talked much. Quiet and polite as he was, he became, however, morose and always suspicious. Fate had taught him to be so. During the dozens and even hundreds of searches he went through, he mocked the K. G. B. in every possible way.

General Stanescu had many personal things which he wanted to take home at any cost. For instance, he had a pocket knife he had received as a present from his daughter before he left for the front, a few trifles — a keyholder, an amulet, his wedding ring and his wristwatch. Had they been found on him, they would have immediately been confiscated in the name of the Soviet people. But he managed to hide them very well during all body searches, and he was proud of that.

In the camp at Iavas, General Stanescu was the safekeeper for the money I had received from our Resistance Movement in Vorkuta. With his help, too, the book *The Woods* was smuggled across the Soviet border. (This book was written in Russian, and I needed it badly as documentary evidence of the Soviet mystification of contemporary events and of the life of the Romanian population in Bessarabia and Bukovina. The writer of the book was merely trying to confuse the readers by charging and accusing former Romanian officials, by slandering and debasing them. One of those slandered was the Christian Orthodox priest Vasile Tepordei.)

Much later, on our way back to Romania, our shipment, consisting of approximately 416 persons (among them 8 women) loaded onto cattle cars, reached the station just before the main station at Balti. Near that place there was a quarry where a great number of laborers were doing their work. Suddenly, from one of the cars of our train someone began to sing the song "Awaken, Romanians!" and others joined in. The workers at the quarry — where the train had just stopped — took off their caps and hats in a show of respect.

What a great moment to see people of the same nation — thrilled by such love and enthusiasm — showing respect to a song which binds an entire people out of which the Romanian nation was formed. Even General Stanescu could not hold back his tears at seeing so much fraternity.

Incidentally, all the services done for me by the general were after my group and I had organized the Easter celebration in 1955, which had impressed him very much.

Stanescu was later released by the Soviets. He lived in Bucharest, Romania, hoping to see the day when out of his pension he could buy a bicycle for his daughter, who was a student. Yes, just a bicycle and nothing else.

But the newly installed Romanian communist government did not recognize his rank of general, apparently because of his former status of army group commander at Stalingrad. So they classified him as an untrained soldier. Fine work, gentlemen-experts!

One day I met him on the boulevard and asked him how he was doing. He answered, "Everything is all right except that I haven't been able to fulfill my dream I had in Russia: to buy a bicycle for my daughter. You see, I have no pension to live on. I have just sent a complaint to the government, hoping that my rank and seniority will be recognized. They have asked me to do something for them, but I rejected their proposition."

The general did not tell me what that proposition was about, but I understood!

After a while, I found out that his legal rights had been reinstated without any compensation for his years of detention in Soviet concentration camps, a remuneration which he certainly deserved.

The majority of the Romanian military officers were in the same situation as Stanescu, but who could give them their rights? If they made any complaint, they were immediately called in for questioning by the K. G. B. puppets, i. e., by the Romanian communist Secret Service, which threatened them with a new trial, whereupon the officers would give up voluntarily. Such is life!

General Dragomir (the chief of staff of General Avramescu during the battles in Czechoslovakia in 1945) was in the same situation. He had been arrested on March 3, 1945, questioned in Moscow in the Lubyanka Prison as well as other prisons, and then sentenced to 8 years. After serving his term, in 1953, he was given forced residence in Karaganda where he worked as a veterinary's assistant on a Soviet state farm. Towards the end of 1959 — as I heard — he was repatriated to Romania. That was after serving those 8 years and other years in deportation. Was he reinstated in his legal rights? Who knows?

GENERAL BECKER

A similar case is that of the German General Becker. All the attempts made by the Soviets to break him, to make him kneel before them and humiliate himself, had failed. He was a dignified representative of the German army, an example of virtue and honesty.

During the brief period of his stay in Camp 2, Mine 7, he was perhaps the only man among the educated people of that camp who stayed on the same straight course without any windings, from the day of his arrival. He did not go to work, and I believe that the Russians could not have forced him to do any kind of labor. He used to show respect to everyone and, in his turn, was respected by everybody, especially by the soldiers and officers of the camp. It was a pleasant sight to watch him taking his walk — every day after the morning call — inside the camp, his hands behind his back, not giving a damn about the weather.

A single incident which he had with a Soviet lieutenant colonel (the deputy of the camp commander and the friend of Doctor Kirilova, nicknamed Kabila) made him lose his temper for a few moments although his disposition usually radiated calmness to others.

This lieutenant colonel had a bad habit of entering the detainees' barracks to check the neatness and cleanliness of the place. Armed with a piece of wire or a straw, he used to check every hole and crack which had appeared in the walls of the barracks. He used to stick the wire or straw into each one, then take it out and smell it, claiming that in this manner he could tell if there were bedbugs in the holes or in the cracks.

One morning, when the Soviet lieutenant colonel mentioned above was on such an inspection tour, right in barrack 37, a detainee dressed only in his underwear and shirt passed by him and went straight to the barrel-toilet to relieve himself. The detainee neither stood at attention nor saluted the lieutenant colonel. When the disrespectful detainee came back from the toilet, the officer called the man in front of him and began to raise hell, threatening the detainee with an exemplary punishment in the isolation chamber of the camp.

It so turned out that the detainee was General Becker himself. Through a German prisoner who spoke Russian fluently, General

Becker told the Soviet officer that it would be better if he continued his activity, that is probing the holes and cracks in the barrack walls by tickling them with the piece of wire and then smelling the farther end of it to find out if any bedbugs were around because this was the best occupation for a Soviet lieutenant colonel. Then he concluded with the words: "For your information, I am General Becker and I had plenty of subordinates of your rank. Let me tell you that if any of my subordinate officers had done what you just did, I would have executed him on the spot in order to save the honor and dignity of the German army."

A few months after this incident, Becker was sent to Moscow for some questioning, accompanied by two Soviet officers who came especially for him from Moscow.

At Becker's departure, all the Soviet administrative officers, headed by the camp commander, Major Malik, were present. Malik presented his apologies for the incident and told Becker that he hoped that the general would not make any complaint regarding the treatment received in the camp. Then, Major Malik and the other Soviet officers present shook General Becker's hand, saying good-bye to him. There was, however, one officer whose hand Becker refused to shake: the bedbug-hunting lieutenant colonel.

CONSUL GENERAL HAMBUCH

In the Soviet death camps there were not only generals, soldiers, common criminals, and political prisoners but also diplomats. The Consul General of Hungary, Hambuch, had a peculiar story to tell.

While the Soviet troops were advancing on all fronts in Germany, some of the refugees of Hungarian nationality in the region of Leipzig found it proper, for safety reasons, to deposit part of their gold and jewelry in the Hungarian consulate in Leipzig. They feared that Soviet plunder would be directed at their persons. Every depositor received a receipt showing the things deposited.

But the K. G. B. was not sleeping. They sensed the move and, after the occupation of Leipzig, began a search a la russe. They forcibly entered the Hungarian consulate, confiscated whatever they could find and — in the name of Soviet law — took it with them.

The Hungarian Consul General, Hambuch, was arrested and confined — just in case — in Special Camp 2 in Buchenwald, at first as a political prisoner.

Now Buchenwald had been a Nazi concentration camp, and after the war there were many stories written about it and about the crimes committed there under the Third Reich. But nobody wrote — or if anyone did write, he wrote too little — about this extermination camp which used new Soviet methods, imported from Moscow.

From time to time, the Buchenwald internees received a newspaper to read. To Mr. Hambuch's astonishment, in one of these newspapers there was an article detailing a theft committed by him and causing substantial loss to his Hungarian compatriots. The article showed how he had stolen a tremendous amount of public money and run to the West.

This was too much for poor Hambuch to bear. He immediately wrote a complaint regarding this matter and addressed it to the Soviet government. He protested like a real diplomat, through official channels, and very soon received the answer: "Sentenced to 25 years for spying for the Nazis and the Americans, in direct collaboration with the imperialists" !

He was then immediately shipped to the Soviet Union — by diplomatic means of transportation — to be initiated into Soviet "truths." Between 1950 and 1953 I knew him in Camp 8, in Vorkuta.

Good lesson for an honest diplomat, to fall into the hands of crooks and learn diplomacy from them!

THE TATTOO AND THE GUARD

Some time ago, in a book written by a French professor, I read that the tattoo is the means of expression of a person with very little advanced culture or civilization. I did not pay attention to it then, but here, in the Soviet death camps and especially in Vorkuta, I realized that there was an epidemic of tattoos. The Romanians, the Americans, the Germans and other foreigners were less inclined towards tattooing their bodies. The tattoo was mostly used by the common thieves and other criminals. It was also a habit of the Russian soldiers on duty and of an important majority of Soviet officers who got a taste for it. The most popular types were a flaming, bleeding heart; a five-pointed star; initials; the name of a girl; and a sailing

ship. I also saw other large examples, covering the entire back or face: a giant vulture with widespread wings; a twisted snake with its head in the navel; a woman's curly head; a mermaid; or the name of the man's sweetheart. The last two were frequent enough. But the most unusual example which I saw in that part of the world was on one of the most hardened criminals. He had killed many people, committed murders even in camps. His victims even included K. G. B. officers and soldiers on guard. After each crime, he got away with 25 years, so he needed a few lives to be able to serve all of his sentences.

Someone told me, "That guy has a taboo, and that's why they don't shoot him. On his chest he has tattooed the images of Lenin and Stalin." To convince myself, I followed him to the shower room. It was true! The features of Lenin and Stalin had been drawn with amazing skill, and the resemblance was striking. Well done! This gorilla had to be allowed to do his whims! Perhaps the Soviets intended some day to preserve his skin as a relic of the beginning of the new era.

Talking about Vorkuta, I recall Sepcuta (the first sergeant), Terlesky (the commissar), and Sasha (the son of the Soviet Colonel Grishchuk). Sasha had enlisted right there, where his father was. He was playing the part of a chauffeur. All these three were the stallions for the female population of the camp. The association is linked to a detainee newly arrived at Vorkuta from somewhere in Siberia. He had been a soldier on guard duty in a camp for women where he tasted the forbidden fruit; he had sinned and paid with 20 years for trespassing beyond the fence protecting that fruit.

The former soldier told me his story. "I was transferred to a mobile concentration camp, one with tents, which kept moving, here and there, as they found work for the detainees. I was accompanying 150 women prisoners — for the most part Ukrainian — who had to mow the hay and gather it into haystacks. Because it was a rainy summer, the hay had to be mowed quickly. They had established a high daily work quota, a crushing one, even for a man.

"One day, the women refused to get up in the morning and go to work. When the first sergeant in charge of the soldiers guarding them inquired about the reason, the women said bluntly, 'We want men!' The first sergeant found himself in an embarrassing situation. He was aware of the fact that he himself had to pay the price for any eventual failure to comply with the terms of the contract signed with the Soviet state farms

for which the women were performing the work. Finally, he came up with an ingenious solution which — though forbidden by all means — could be twisted and made so intricate that it would be open to different interpretations. Invoking the weather conditions and the hasty work required, he appealed to a neighboring concentration camp to lend him — with pay and under contract for a certain period of time — 50 strong male detainees. This might seem like a funny story, but, in a few days, the 50 men ceased to come out to work. However, the daily work quota was being constantly overfulfilled by the women alone!"

Since it is not proper to look into all the causes of the appearance of the drone bees in the hive or to poke into the most intimate things, I gladly let the curtain fall. I therefore shall conclude this episode with the exclamations of our storyteller: "You should have seen the neat and excellent work done by the women! And the progress! No quarrels, no envy, no grudge, no scandals!"

There is a somehow similar explanation for the good life of Sepcuta (and the others mentioned before), who used to nap among the birch trees, in the shade. No remorse, no hidden thoughts! This is the game of life! When the beast is thirsty, it drinks; when it is hungry, it eats; and that is all there is to it! No metaphysics, no dialectics! Therefore, long live life! "Anywhere in this world, I shall sing and always be happy if close to my sweetheart!" was the song of the libertine Horace, two thousand years ago!

Beria was a libertine too, but he did not delight his sweetheart with verses and caresses as lewd Horace did. One of Beria's sweethearts was in Vorkuta, a detainee, a beautiful woman. They said she had been a movie star and that Beria used to send her husband — an air force colonel — on long and far-away missions so Beria could have the unrestrained liberty to keep company with the colonel's wife, whom he liked. But she did not accept his advances and rebuked him. She did not tolerate either his presence or his caresses. And the great master Beria did almost exactly as Terlesky had. Well, he did not soil the fence of her house with pitch or steal any stamps or seals (she did not have any), but he devised some excuse for her arrest. There are plenty of jokes and ironies told in the entertainment world, but there are many informers among entertainers, too!

She was sentenced and sent to Vorkuta without any explanation! An actress at the Arctic Circle! To her audience back home she was suddenly gone, without any trace. Her husband could not trace her whereabouts either.

Here in the camp she worked clearing snow from the regional airport which linked the Arctic Circle to Moscow. She became a work-brigade leader. And because the danger of escape from that zone was deemed almost nonexistent, the women — generally speaking — enjoyed a less strict supervision.

This made it possible, one day, for the former actress to talk to the pilot of an airplane whom she had recognized as one of her husband's friends. Breathlessly, she told him what had happened to her and asked him to tell her husband about it. Shortly thereafter, her husband engineered her escape in the following manner: He somehow landed at Vorkuta piloting the postal airplane without anybody else knowing it. The sentries were at fixed checkpoints surrounding part of the zone. He then snatched his wife — who had dared not to allow the all-powerful Beria to share the warmth of her bedsheets — and they both took off in the airplane. It was a bombshell escape and eventually very successful. In any case, we did not hear anything else about it. But the sentries received their punishment, and the camp administration tightened security; that is, they tightened the screws.

THE KARAGANDA UPRISING: 1954

1954. News told by eyewitnesses comes from Karaganda. It seems that the same atmosphere hangs over all Soviet death camps. Too many wolves put the sheep on the move. Two camps — one for women, the other for men — separated only by three lines of barbed wire and a wall of clay and without any possibility of linkage. Both these camps go on strike simultaneously. Just for the record, the overwhelming majority of these detainees are Ukrainians. While waiting for a commission to investigate, the strikers open up the lines of barbed wire and fraternize. So as not to give the K. G. B. the opportunity to charge them with prostitution, each woman picks a man and vice versa, and detainee priests — there are plenty of these, too — perform their marriage ceremonies under the open sky of the Lord, in front of public witnesses and accompanied by songs.

In a few days, these camps are surrounded by tanks carrying K. G. B. troops. The political officers communicate in a loud

voice the regulations which forbid cohabitation among detainees. No one complies, and the Soviet T-34 tanks dash through the main gates causing panic and death.

It is very interesting to remark that in Kingir (where these events took place), the main leadership of the strike was assumed by a Soviet officer, former commander of a tank regiment which entered Berlin victoriously in 1945. After serving 5 years as a colonel in the Soviet occupation troops in East Germany — he had all possible Soviet medals -- he was arrested by the K. G. B. in 1950 and sentenced to 25 years on the basis of paragraph 58, line 1-A. The charges: treason to the Soviet motherland. (He had tried to desert with his entire tank regiment to the West.) This man's name was Kuznetsov, and he was Russian by origin. He had received, and was familiar with, the whole of Soviet education, and he had been blinded by the Kremlin's propaganda. Only now was he able to see the naked truth. He had fought for the liberation of his motherland, and now he was living in the Kingir camp.

He, the former colonel and conqueror of Berlin, took responsibility for the leadership of the Kingir uprising. As a good military man and strategist, he was recognized and selected by the political detainees as their leader and representative. It is likely that, at first, most of the detainees did not want him as leader because of their great hatred for the Soviet regime. But this was just a counterreaction caused by the awareness of his victorious entry into Berlin and by his present condition of modern slave in Kingir.

In any case, in the Vorkuta strike the Kremlin had already been defeated morally. It had sent there — as representatives — resounding names (in the Soviet Union and in the international arena) such as the former head of the Commission from Moscow, army General Maslenikov (deputy of the Minister of the Interior of the Soviet Union, deputy member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and representative of the Party and of the Supreme Soviet), and R. A. Rudenko, representative of the Soviet government. (It must not be forgotten that Rudenko had been the Soviet prosecutor at the international trials at Nuremberg.)

These representatives had had official power assigned to them in writing by the President of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, Marshal K. E. Voroshilov.

Unlike during the Vorkuta strike, this time the Soviet government sent two second-rank generals without resounding names

but authorized to take the countermeasures they considered fit on the spot: General Dolgich and General Bitskov. These two, the tools — together with the entire Kremlin leadership — were responsible for the killing of over 500 people, including 200 women, and for the wounding of hundreds. It was a tragic result of the merciless "strategic operation" executed under the slogan "We fight for Peace!" by Bitskov and Dolgich under direct orders from Bulganin and Khrushchev (the Soviet leaders whose hands were fraternally shaken by many politicians in the West).

"There were married couples" — the Ukrainians and the Asians shipped from Karaganda told us — "who let themselves be run over by tanks rather than be separated."

The figures told by these eyewitnesses are rather high, but I prefer that a new Nuremberg establish them with accuracy!

Whereas for the Vorkuta strike two new K. G. B. divisions were brought in, for the Kingir strike, just for one camp, there was only one heavily armed division, but it was backed up by T-34 tanks and fighter planes. Under such "strategic" circumstances, the Kremlin does not use local troops (perhaps because it does not trust them) but brings other units from far-away places. If the Soviet soldier receives his ration of vodka only on great holidays and then only 50 grams, then under such circumstances as those described above, the Soviet soldier's ration of vodka is given to him daily and several times as much. The consequences are obvious!

THE PRESS AGENCIES GET COMPETITION

We looked like a press agency! With every newly arrived detainee, we were receiving more and more news which we recorded. We all discussed the news, ruminated over it and got ourselves into a certain mood which spread rapidly in this environment which we found so difficult to break away from. A continuous ebbing and flowing tide, strains and breakdowns, indignities and small satisfactions. Sometimes even big ones. But what didn't come about in this general groping about in the dark! Good jokes, bad-taste jokes, some unusual episode — such as the rats' corrida — or discussions in very small groups (usually made up of two or three people and called "high-level talks").

This was the kind of life we led, we who now were at the

strategic sites picked by Stalin and Beria for the material bases of the future Russian-American conflict. We were all aware of that. The Soviet officialdom compelled us to think that way by cursing all the time and mentioning only America. Yes, they kept cursing the Americans to whom they always appealed for loans and even for agreements not to interfere in matters of foreign interest for the Russians. We fully lived in this atmosphere of taunting. It was like two dogs who meet in the road, stop, growl, smell each other's nose and then each other's behind. Will they lick each other or will they fight?

In this explosive kind of atmosphere, news kept coming to us because fresh human merchandise kept arriving, as in the old times the black slaves from Africa kept pouring onto the continent of the new world. From somewhere in the Crimea, a warrant officer arrived. He had been sentenced to 25 years. He had hardly entered our midst before we found out that he had been the escort of Marshal von Paulus during the hunting parties in which von Paulus used to take part alongside Soviet generals and other Soviet officials. This warrant officer's job was to reload von Paulus' spare rifle. Among other things he knew that von Paulus was writing specialty lectures for the courses held at the Soviet Military Academy, lectures which he always discussed beforehand with some of the Soviet generals who paid him visits in the Crimea or accompanied him on his hunting trips. Isn't this interesting news?

While von Paulus (well fed and with a secure lodging in a villa, in one of the Crimean seaside resorts with Mediterranean vegetation) was hunting, accompanied by a vanquisher-slave and by proletarians in uniforms decorated with Tsarist embroidery and epaulets; yes, while von Paulus was going hunting, railway cars carrying live skeletons, people emaciated by starvation, cold and misery — for whom the same von Paulus had been god and commander — arrived at Vorkuta. Can you imagine how a live skeleton, an emaciated person, looks? It's horrible! On the deformed bones the skin, spotted with the bluish-grey color of death, hangs loose.

A most saddening spectacle I had to live through was the arrival of a shipment of skeleton women at the transfer camp. It's horrible to see such a woman when one should want to caress her and feel the velvet-like softness of her skin!

I had seen skeleton men at Bautzen, Sachsenhausen, under the Soviets, when I had been subjected to questionings and investigations. I can testify that there was absolutely no difference

between these people and those in Soviet propaganda pictures of the Nazi Auschwitz.

One day, Raymond Souillat and the French-Polish Paul Iliatzef — who worked as fire caretakers at the shower stoves — said to me: "Come and take a look, and for the rest of your life you'll never be longing for a sweetheart's caress!"

O, God! Where had these skeleton, bluish-grey, ulcerated women come from? And what kind of food rationing had they been subjected to that their skin was so flaccid? Their garments hung loosely on them and their gait — which supposedly had to preserve yet a reminder of coquetry — was just the shuffle of a slovenly old woman. I was stunned looking through the crack in the wall which my friends from Montmartre had made for me.

In front of my eyes there was a woman who under normal circumstances should have weighed — by height and bone structure — approximately 75 kilograms. Now she looked far below 40 kilos. The skin of her belly was wrinkled and hung over her genitalia like an apron. Her breasts looked like two pieces of torn sail rags on a becalmed ship.

Souillat told me that the women were so hungry that for just one slice of bread, some of them — as ugly as they looked — had already offered their graces to a few common criminals.

Before the women came out of the shower room, all the detainees took bread out of their own mouths, gathered whatever they could and stealthily handed to them the gift of human understanding. The game of life presents aspects and aspects and they can not blend. Baseness can become sublime whereas the sublime can fall into baseness. The game of life at that particular time had a certain aspect, with its precise rules. And who could laugh when it was time for crying? Whom does the absurdity of this game serve? The meaning of these human skeletons shipped to the Arctic Circle only to be shipped back after two days in other railway cars in a mournful convoy is a mystery, a terrible mystery. An experience in reeducation after the advanced methods of Makarenko! Sad, but true. The naked truth is that, in the Soviet Union, mankind's most sinister farce is being performed.

THE HOLODILNIK ENCOUNTER

Here, in the camp at Holodilnik, in Vorkuta, in the summer of 1954, I met S. S. Untersturmfuehrer Paul Siebert, who had acted upon direct orders from the K. G. B. in other circumstances, too. I have skipped over him as well as over many years of grave events, but right now the chronicle will take up where I left him. This time I was informed by Gunther Titz — from sources which I did not ask him to identify — who slept right near Paul Siebert, and by two Soviet soldiers from Bessarabia who were part of camp security and who overheard the conversation between Siebert and a Soviet political commissar sent on a special mission by the K. G. B. headquarters in the city. His mission was to order Siebert to assassinate me after creating favorable circumstances.

Special camp at Holodilnik. From left to right: the author, a former Ukrainian freedom fighter, a former Estonian freedom fighter, and Sergei Seadek (a Russian-German). Vorkuta, 1954

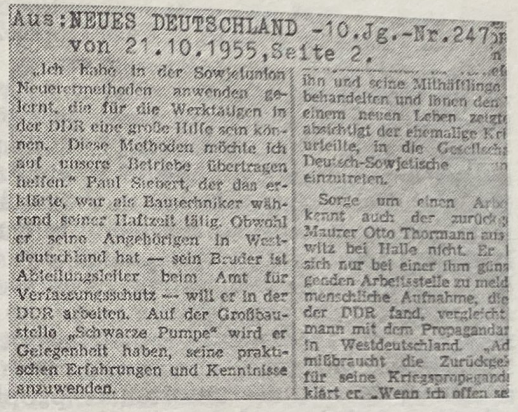
The Ukrainian community of detainees was also informed about this plot through a prisoner — a tool of the K. G. B. In solidarity with my rebellious attitude, the Ukrainian community decided to set up — in complete secrecy — a personal guard to watch me and to kill Siebert before he could fulfill his official task.

When I found out about the Ukrainians' decision, I thanked them, asking them to leave the honor of settling accounts with Siebert to me. I was going to deal with him in accordance with the creed left by Zamolxes to the Carpathian Geto-Dacians.

A coward like his Soviet masters who enticed him, instead of fulfilling the task for which he ate the hogwash of the K. G. B., in a last desperate maneuver, he ran away from me and took refuge in the camp command building.

The next day, accompanied by a powerful escort of Soviet soldiers, he was taken out of the Holodilnik camp and shipped away — as I found out later, at his own request — to Potma.

Luckily — perhaps for both of us — we did not meet again though I had news about him. In one of the late-October, 1955 issues of the newspaper *Neues Deutschland*, published in the German Democratic Republic, a newspaper which we had been receiving lately in the camp, I read to my astonishment that a comrade by the name of Paul Siebert — recently arrived in East Germany from the Soviet Union — had given an interview. In it, Paul Siebert, the great German patriot and scholar, was lecturing the German nation about the teachings he had stored while in the service of the K. G. B.



Aus: NEUES DEUTSCHLAND - 10. Jg. - Nr. 247
von 21.10.1955, Seite 2.

„Ich habe in der Sowjetunion Neuerermethoden anwenden gelernt, die für die Werktätigen in der DDR eine große Hilfe sein können. Diese Methoden möchte ich auf unsere Betriebe übertragen helfen." Paul Siebert, der das erklärte, war als Bautechniker während seiner Haftzeit tätig. Obwohl er seine Angehörigen in Westdeutschland hat — sein Bruder ist Abteilungsleiter beim Amt für Verfassungsschutz — will er in der DDR arbeiten. Auf der Großbaustelle „Schwarze Pumpe" wird er Gelegenheit haben, seine praktischen Erfahrungen und Kenntnisse anzuwenden.

ihn und seine Mithäftlinge behandelten und ihnen den einem neuen Leben zeigte absichtigt der ehemalige Kr urteilte, in die Gesellsch Deutsch-Sowjetische einzutreten.

Sorge um einen Arb kennt auch der zurückg Maurer Otto Thormann aus witz bei Halle nicht. Er sich nur bei einer ihm gün genden Arbeitsstelle zu meld menschliche Aufnahme, die der DDR fand, vergleicht mann mit dem Propagandar in Westdeutschland. „Ad mißbraucht die Zurückge für seine Kriegspropaganda klärt er. „Wenn ich offen se

Article on page 2 of the East German newspaper "Neues Deutschland," issue 247, published on October 21, 1955. Comrade Paul Siebert makes "patriotic" statements after returning from the Soviet Union.

For the comrade reporter who took the interview I should like to make — through this book — the following recommendation: Let him call again on this great lecturer of the Germans in the German Democratic Republic and take another interview for which we suggest the following questions: (1) What information did he pass on to the K. G. B. regarding his own nation? (2) How many missions as subversive agent and agent provocateur were assigned to him by the K. G. B.? (3) How many statements in the K. G. B. safe did he sign? (4) What special mission for the German people was assigned to him by the Soviet government?

Siebert, you are not that old and, as you realize, though far away, I have found out many things about you and perhaps

we shall meet again one day! Your rank of S. S. Untersturmfuehrer and especially the scar on your cheek can not be forgotten! (Perhaps — to be in fashion — you made that scar yourself by cautiously using the razor while looking at your face in the mirror.) I swear that, as your scar was meant to show honor, it shall pay for your deeds of shame. You shamed yourself and the German nation! If necessary, we can straighten this out knives in hand as in Vorkuta.

BALTIC INTERMEZZO

The anticipation of the end of a story concerning one of the basest individuals I've come across in my life made me lay aside Vorkuta for a while. But here I return to Vorkuta to stay for a long time. This short Baltic intermezzo with references to literature and history is linked to the name of a Jewish physician from Vilnius, Lithuania. His name is Rubinstein, and he was a medical doctor who, accompanied by 5 other delegates, ran away to Moscow in 1939, afraid of an eventual German invasion, and asked the Soviet government — in the name of the Lithuanian people — to incorporate Lithuania into the borders of the "great friend and savior of enslaved nations" — the Soviet Union!

Among many other unfortunate people met at Vorkuta, my attention had been drawn to this man, who had a peculiar position assigned to him by the Soviet authorities: cleaning all the latrines in the camp. When I met him, he was serving a sentence of 25 years of hard labor after being charged by a Soviet court as a "traitor to the Soviet motherland."

I befriended him, of course, and I found out his entire story, subsequently confirmed by other Baltic citizens and compatriots of his who had known him in his times of glory.

Doctor Rubinstein had been born and had lived in Lithuania, and he was very well versed in the history and problems of the Baltic states. He went to university in Switzerland, where he assimilated whatever Western Europe could teach. But later on, especially after 1953, when an attempt — real or fake — was made for the first time to assassinate Joseph Stalin, Beria's thunderbolts fell on Rubinstein, too, though he was in prison. By orders from the top level of the Soviet hierarchy — as political officer Prokhurov said — regardless of their profession, all Jews had to perform the dirtiest and most menial kind of work: cleaning latrines. This was Rubinstein's fate, too.

But let him tell his own story. "You see, in this Russian graveyard on parallel 68, we get along well, regardless of the extent of Nazi affiliation or communist international affiliation. You can see the hell of a brotherhood in this land of death! We are a bunch of relics which — for the time being — do not interest anybody. But the time shall come when, for special interests or for finding a hole in someone's coat, they will unearth us from oblivion and we shall be a cause for other confrontations.

"Then they will remember that there has been — some time ago — a Lithuania, as well as an Estonia and a Latvia. The first stretched over 65,200 square kilometers and had a population of 3,500,000; the second covered 45,100 square kilometers and had a population of 1,288,000; and the third was 637,000 square kilometers with a population of 2,273,000.

"They would recall then that Poland was invaded by the Nazis and the Soviets — and very quickly, too — after a preliminary and treacherous understanding between Hitler and Stalin, i. e., between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union (the peaceful liberator of mankind). They will recall then that Lvov, the powerful cultural and commercial center of Catholic Poland, has never been Russian; that Romanian Bukovina and Bessarabia have had fortresses — built in ancient times — with battlements and towers facing towards Rurik's Moscow, towards the regions from where the hordes of Timur Lenk have come, that — finally — the Ukraine has her own story and has never fraternized with Russia — as all nations lying in this huge prison of the world have always guarded against Moscow's cunning.

"But until that time comes, this world — from the Crimea to Novaya Zemlya and from the Baltic to the accursed Sakhalin in the Pacific (mentioned in Chekhov's and Ossendovski's writings) — will live gnashing its teeth in hunger and under the rule of the caprice of the Soviet police. Exactly as you, today, feel it on your own skin.

"These three countries stretching along the shore of the Baltic Sea have their own history. Lands of old and hospitable tribes, these three countries endured the adversity of many invasions and nourished always the hope of freedom. The history of these countries is abundant with invasions. The deeds of the Teutonic Knights and of the Muscovite princes are still alive in the memory of the inhabitants of these places. But let me refer to the book of a great Lithuanian scholar, W. St. Vidumas, titled *Lithuania in the Past and Present*, in

which — though it is a rather old book — anyone who so desires can study the history of the Baltic states and especially of Lithuania and can learn many interesting things.

"What is strange in this book" — Rubinstein pointed out — "is the fact that Vidumas (though describing the Norse character of the Lithuanians and of the Baltics in general) claims that their blood is not Norse but comes from a Finnish-Turkish race from deep inside Asia.

"Out of national pride, and out of hate against the Russians, not only Vidumas but all Baltics refuse to admit that Slavic blood runs in their veins in spite of reality, which has demonstrated that they look more like Slavs than like Finno-Turks. Because Russia has also been under Norse influence, and in order to deny any connection with the Slavs, the Lithuanians — in spite of reality — deny their strong blood kinship with the Norsemen. You see, my boy, how much aversion the Baltics have towards the Russians! How can you imagine that they will ever live in peace under Moscow's roof?" Rubinstein asked me.

I asked myself — and I had no desire to say it aloud — why this educated Jew — who knew so many things — had gone to Moscow to seek to bless the Lithuanians with Soviet protection?

"They renounce their forefathers only because these forefathers — especially the educated class — have turned Slavic, as Lyubova (Aimee) Dostoevsky writes in her book *The Life of My Father*, published in Paris in 1926. She reached the following conclusion: Through his intelligence, goodness, profoundly humane sentiments and through his conscience, Fyodor Dostoevsky is not a real Russian. Moreover, he is not Russian at all but an authentic Lithuanian in spirit and origin.

" 'Reading the biography of my father' " — Lyubova Dostoevsky is quoted here by Doctor Rubinstein — " 'I wonder why his biographers present him only as Russian — sometimes even more Russian than the Russians — when on his father's side he was of pure Lithuanian origin and on his mother's side he was Ukrainian.'

"The Lithuanians have the same mixture of Slavic and Finnish-Turkish population as the Russians," continued Rubinstein. "However, there is a big difference between these two peoples or nations. Russia has been under the Tartar yoke for a long time and has been markedly Mongolized. Scratch a Russian and you'll find a Tartar or a Mongol.

"Like the other Baltic states, Lithuania was, in her turn, very much influenced by the Vikings' descendants, who traded with the Greeks and the Levant through the Niemen and the Dnieper.

"In Lithuania, the Norsemen used to set up huge depots of goods which they upgraded into fortresses and subsequently into flourishing cities. Some of these exist to this day: Polozk, for instance, was ruled by the Norse Prince Rovgolod.

"These Norsemen — settled on the shore of the Baltic Sea — brought so much order to these Finnish provinces that the Slavs — the forefathers of the modern Russians — started to envy the Finns and invited into their own capital cities a Norse prince to organize them. Thus, to make the story short, the Russians brought in Prince Rurik, a Viking conqueror, and offered him the title of Grand Duke. Under this title and then under that of Tsar, Rurik's descendants succeeded to the Russian crown until the seventeenth century, when the death of the last descendant caused turmoil and anarchy until the election of Mikhail Romanov (also of Lithuanian descent, i. e., a Slav of strong Norse heritage).

"Regarding the last Romanov, Nicholas II, it seems that he was less entitled to the throne of Russia than the well known anarchist Pyotr Kropatkin, who also was descended from Prince Rurik through a more direct line!

"Some historians talk about the Varegs — and not about the Norsemen — as having played a significant part in the life and development of Lithuania, the Ukraine and then Russia. But these Varegs were in fact Norsemen. 'Vareg' was a nickname given to the Norseman; in the old Slavic language it meant 'enemy' and is spelt 'vrag' in contemporary Russian. In other words, the 'varegs' or 'enemies' whom the Slavs were fighting at that time were the Norsemen.

"Similarly, a Slavic nickname, 'Nemtzi,' had been given to the Germans. It comes from the old Slavic word 'nemzi,' which means 'mute.' This nickname was given to the Germans because they could not communicate by speaking to the Russians but only by gestures.

"But let us leave semantics aside. The result of Norse-Lithuanian crossbreeding was a population of an exceptional resoluteness and character which subsequently defeated the Tartars, the Russians, the Ukrainians, the Poles, and the Teutonic Knights.

"In the fourteenth century, Lithuania was a grand duchy incorporating the entire Ukraine and a great part of Russia. This is what the actual documents of those times show. Moreover, at the court of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, most

Russians who did not want to submit to the bloody despotism of Ivan the Terrible took refuge.

"In 1392, under the leadership of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, there was a prince of Norse origin by the name of Vitold. This shows that, even in those times, the Norse influence in the Baltic territories was already strong.

"In their turn, the Ukraine and Russia became stronger, too. Also organized by the Norsemen — who disappeared in the Slavic ocean of people — they broke away from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and became independent. Lithuania — which became weaker and weaker — could no longer oppose her mortal enemy, the Teutonic Knights, who imposed upon her the institutions and magistratures of their medieval type of spirituality, which included the Catholic faith.

"Protestantism did not have an impact upon Lithuanian mysticism, which proved that the Lithuanians had Slavic blood running in their veins. Luther's protestant movement could not be understood in its essence and did not gain ground in Lithuania. On the contrary, the Finns and Estonians — who are of Finnish-Turkish extraction without any Slavic mixture — embraced Lutheranism enthusiastically. The Latvians — related to the Lithuanians as a race and incorporated into Russia until 1918 — embraced Protestantism.

"When the Poles succeeded in taking away Lithuania from the Teutonic Knights, the Lithuanians went back to the Christian Orthodox faith of their forefathers or embraced the Catholicism spread by the Jesuit monks — a fact upon which the Poles capitalized immediately by building Latin schools and institutions for the Lithuanians in order to draw them nearer. The Poles did this especially for the Lithuanian noblemen to whom they awarded ranks and whom they integrated into the Polish nobility.

"Due to their Norse lineage and to their immediate vicinity to cultural centers created by Catholicism in Poland and Austria, the Lithuanians first, and the Ukrainians second, were much more civilized than their Russian neighbors. As a matter of fact, through their attitude, the Poles, the Lithuanians, and the Ukrainians laughed at, mocked, and despised Russian barbarism and lack of culture.

"But after Lithuania's occupation by Russia, the Lithuanian intellectuals emigrated in large numbers, as their forefathers, the Norsemen, used to do, going where Fate directed them.

"Losing almost all her intellectuals — who emigrated and settled in the great cities of the world, especially in Russia,

Poland and the Ukraine — Lithuania was eventually left with a rustic society made up of peasants and petty bourgeoisie who very vaguely recalled the glory and might of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, barely understanding the causes of her downfall. It seems that — like Vidumas — these Lithuanian intellectuals have forgotten their Norse origin and culture and take pride in their supposed Ugro-Finnish-Turkish origin. In any case, they deny — with pride and stubbornness — any kinship with the Slavs and especially with the Russians, towards whom they display a profound contempt (exactly like the Poles, Ukrainians, Georgians and Romanians). They do not know — or do not like to know — that the Ugro-Finnish-Turkish peoples are some kind of ancestors of the Russians, Poles and Ukrainians as well as theirs by their crossbreeding with the Slavs.

"As time passed, the Lithuanian intellectual emigrants — cut off from the regenerating sap of the people whom they had wickedly deserted — buried themselves within the Russian colossus and got lost like the daring Varegs — or Norsemen — who roamed and colonized the world with their spirit and flesh. Lithuania — like her two smaller sisters — seems for the time being lost under Moscow's protection.

"But let us go on to Vidumas, the historian, to Lyubova Dostoevsky," continued Rubinstein. "Documents disclosed in fear attested to the fact that the Dostoevskys were ardent Catholics. Lyubova's father and uncle often mentioned her grandfather's words explaining the origin of their family: 'We, the Dostoevskys, are Lithuanians. We are not Polish. Lithuania is an altogether different country from Poland.'

"However, like every renegade, like all intellectuals of all times and nations who renounced and reneged on their origin, Dostoevsky displayed a deep loathing, suspicion or distrust towards everything non-Russian. In spite of the fact that he knows that he is Lithuanian on his father's side and Ukrainian on his mother's side, Dostoevsky does not pay any attention to Lithuania or the Ukraine in his thoughts and sentiments, in his pan-Slavic political and literary writings. He proclaims himself Russian, wants to stay Russian and believes with certitude that he is the most Russian among Russians, the most Slavic among Slavs.

"According to Dostoevsky's political creed, the virtues of the European spirit are nothing but poison for the Orient and drive faithful Russia to corruption and downfall. He has a strong mystic belief that only the Russian and Byzantine Christian

Orthodoxy can save Europe. In his opinion, Christian religion, mainly Christian Eastern Orthodoxy, is essential for the Russians. In spite of the excesses of barbaric cruelty, deep inside the Russian — who is a Mongolized Slav — lies a Christian soul. Even the nihilists and anarchists in Dostoevsky's novels remain profoundly religious and chaotic mystics like the peasant whom they intend to transform. In Russia, European order and Western nationalism become just a shameless, bloody anarchy.

"If Dostoevsky is and remains a realist, his realism is not of a Slavic nature because the Russians are not realists, even when they become atheists and revolutionaries. They continue to remain mystics and dreamers in whatever they undertake, in all their gigantisms. Instead of studying life, the Russians stick to dreaming even when acting, and if they rebel and try to become realists, they immediately fall into Mongol cynicism and eroticism because their ancestors' shackles on their ankles still weigh too heavily. Thus Dostoevsky's realism can not be Slavic but is — in spite of his denials — of Norse origin through Lithuanian roots because only the daring Norsemen have looked straightforwardly at life, unafraid to show it as it is.

"Read Dostoevsky thoroughly; read all Russian literature; read Vidumas, Chekhov, Pushkin, Tolstoy; study all the activity of the Narodniks, the politics of the Tsars, of the anarchists and of the Soviet leaders of today and you will see that my clairvoyant Semitic spirit is not mistaken.

"As a matter of fact, all I have told you is the fruit of reading and expresses my own opinion only to the extent of compilation. I did this in order to spend my time in a more pleasant way between two latrine-cleaning jobs. And you, as a young boy, get this into your head and never forget poor Rubinstein and his Golgotha.

"Like all of us here today — Lithuanians, Estonians, Latvians, Poles, Georgians and Romanians — Dostoevsky was a morally and spiritually isolated man, thrown into this motley of Slavs and Mongols who disfigure and slobber on everything they lay their hands on and maim any idea or concept according to their chaotic measurement . . ."

Here I interrupted the doctor. "Let us not forget, Doc, that Dostoevsky was a nihilist and that, because of this, in 1849, he was sentenced to death, then his sentence was commuted to imprisonment, and he was sent to Siberia for 10 years with forced residence. Perhaps you did not want to comment upon that small event in his life."

Doctor Rubinstein continued. "No, kid. I left this event out intentionally. Everybody knows about this blemish for which Dostoevsky is sung praises by the Soviets today. Had he lived in our times, he would have been my workmate, for a long time, as an intellectual!

"Just to wake you up, I should like to add — so that you know about it, too — that Dostoevsky's is not a unique case. I am not referring to us little worms. Almost all the great writers who lived in Russia felt uneasy and isolated because of their foreign origin.

"Pushkin was of foreign origin. His grandfather had been an Ethiopian slave given by the Sultan of Istanbul to the Tsars. Nobody mentioned his origin, though, on the occasion of the celebrations marking his anniversary. The poet Lermontov was descended from a Scotsman by the name of Lermont driven to Russia by who-knows-what causes and winds. The poet Zhukovsky was the son of a Turk; Nekrasov was the son of a Pole; Dostoevsky — as I said before — was half Lithuanian, half Ukrainian. Lithuania and the Norsemen — on his father's side — had formed his character and civilized spirit, and the Ukraine — on his mother's side — had awakened in him the poetry and songs from the hearts of his ancestors, i. e., the spark which lit the fire wood gathered by the Norsemen in the woods of the North and during their wanderings across adverse seas. Like any good Norseman and Lithuanian, Dostoevsky took to the great feudal lord, the Tsar, exactly as he took to the beggars and the disinherited. In his soul — as in the soul of the Lithuanians whom we have here, under our eyes, in this inferno — belonging to a social class or caste does not mean segregation of people. This is the reason for his noble, firm attitude towards human dignity — an outlook which is purely Norse and Lithuanian (as stated by Vidumas himself, whose views I know well).

"The poet Alexei Tolstoy is Ukrainian; Lev Tolstoy is a descendant of German colonists. Only Turgenev and Gonchearov are Russians. In the end, one could reach the conclusion — as Lyubova Dostoevsky does — that Russia herself was never able to give birth to talents but, at most, only to kindle them. The fire wood has to be gathered by other nations — more civilized and older.

"The life of the Russians had been just a continued struggle and mixture with Mongol society and thought, which overwhelmed and suffocated the Russians.

"The poet Pushkin wrote indignantly, 'To hell with being

born in Russia!' And the poet Lermontov exclaimed, 'This is a dirty country of slaves and masters!'

"As far as the honest 'patriarch' and German colonist — who became a 'count' — from Yasnaya Polyana, Lev Tolstoy, is concerned, here is what he wrote: 'I think of expatriating myself, of running away from this ocean of cowardice, of shameless laziness which threatens — from all sides — to swallow the island of honest and laborious life I have devised for myself!' "

"I have to interrupt you here, Doc," I said. "Since you referred to all or the majority of the Russian poets and writers of foreign origin, don't you think it would be proper to mention Antiochus Cantemir? He was one of the founders of classicism in Russian literature. He lived between 1708 and 1744 and was the son of Dimitrie Cantemir — the ruler of Moldavia — who also played his part in universal history."

The good doctor continued his lecture, which had by now become a daily routine. "Forgive me, but I purposely did not mention him. He was Moldavian by origin, and today the Moldavians are intentionally looked upon by the Soviets as a nation apart from the Romanian nation. I know that you were born in Romania and you love her like any man who loves his native place, his recollections; and I did not want to touch your sensitive chord because I want us to remain friends.

"Like myself, you live in the same conditions! They knocked you about this spiritual and material wasteland. You are young, but you have an experience which I could not get from the universities and the cities of the West. You've met people of all nations and conditions, and I am sure you have seen and understood on your own most of what you hear from me.

"You have realized how much I hate and despise the Mongol blood, lack of culture and barbarism of the Russians. All these nations confined by this Soviet fence — the Lithuanians, the Latvians, the Estonians, the Poles, the Ukrainians, the Georgians in the Caucasus, the Armenians, the Jews, and all of you who have been dragged here and are more civilized than the Russians — all of these have had in the past and continue to have at present, too, a tremendous influence upon Russian intellectuality, which now as ever feels itself attracted towards Europe. Unfortunately, this Russian society hypnotized by Europe can not understand the realistic spirit of the latter.

"The tragedy which was bound to happen, happened. A bunch of dreamers associated with crooks and overly ambitious people — bent upon ruling and imposing their political-economic fantasies

onto European utopia — brought in a sealed railroad car the modern theories of the social order without the so-called exploitation by the state which must disappear but which in order to do so must first strengthen itself and become a dictatorship!

"The new Soviet leaders who had assassinated the Tsar had the same psychological deviation, specifically Russian, which always ended in gigantisms and hallucinatory deformations. Instead of mystical participation — with which the Russian mentality is imbued — the Russians were given Hegel's dialectics and Feuerbach's materialism, which — when put together — result in an outlook which helps the Russians to dive deeper, more obscurely and chaotically in the emptiness of *nichevo* (i. e., 'nothing') and *budit lutchie* (i. e., 'it will be better'). This time, it is done in a scientific manner, based upon the latest data from the most specialized sciences. In this manner, it can be demonstrated that the arrow of the ancient Greek Zenon remains in the same place though shot from the bow; that the road to the better goes, in fact, through the worse, through tragedy or even death; that the Platonic idea and Socrates' concept — so furiously attacked by materialism — can become unvanquishable weapons (a fact known even to the most unadvised among idealists). But this dialectical addition — a most feared weapon of the progressive-minded — did not do anything except to bring the Trojan horse into the fortress of materialism, marking thus the practical inconsistency of the new philosophy, because practice is the touchstone and the criterion of the truths put forward by theoretic systems. In this perspective, a similar principle-idea is hardly conceivable — regardless of the number of people and of the degree of proletarianization of the masses — as long as it is based upon the oneness and primordiality of matter, which in its last stages of development becomes selfconscious. Thus, the foundation of this similar theory makes us doubt its truth or the honesty of those who devised it.

"This theory of Communism boils with Marx' discontent, within the range of his spiritual revolt. This could be the range of my spiritual revolt as well as that of the entire Jewish race, a revolt which the tired-out Ahasverus — the wandering Jew — has been carrying inside him for centuries across the parallels and meridians of this earth. But this spiritual revolt has nothing to do with the discontent of the scoundrels from the Russian steppe and tundra or with the psychologically deranged who — barely out of those 300 years of Mongol yoke — cheat mankind by fluttering new notions about liberty with the sole aim of

chaining the human race more tightly and debasing it even more than the barbarians of the first millenium did.

"Look around you! Here you see the people whom these topsy-turvies — wearing the mask of Science (they who are as brainless as a night with no light at all) — have deprived of the right to worship God, who is their only light and hope, and have given instead this abyss of pain and despair into which you and I have also been thrown by circumstance.

"Just look at me and — regardless of how much enmity you have shown me — you should admit that even here where there are no physicians and where there is so much need of them, they should not do this to me (regardless of my guilt and how much of a criminal I may be), that is, making me clean their portable latrine. Do you realize how much energy and human values (accumulated over long, difficult years of study and work) are wasted — at all levels and stages of society — by the political and philosophical imbecility of the Soviet leaders, through this new, scientifically disorganized way of life? I am convinced that Hitler (in spite of his derangement, a derangement in which I do not believe though I am a Jew) never used professionals like me in prisons and camps — regardless of his hate against us — to clean latrines. I was a big idiot! Only now do I understand Dostoevsky's perspicacity and prophetic power!

"Europe — and I alongside her — believed, together with diverse immigrants (who were blind, too), that the Russian peasant dreamed about a 'democratic republic' (as Lyubova Dostoevsky stated). But today, when the place of the Tsars has been taken by the new communist regime which is felt equally by all of us, both you and I and Europe understand how much we have been deceived! But besides what we live through now, I am convinced that the Bolshevism of the Russian colossus has in store for mankind still more painful awakenings and unpleasant surprises."

I interrupted him. "You want to destroy them by displaying so many quotations and documents, Doc! Come on, this is not possible. There are hundreds of millions of Slavs, and you can not ignore them. I've always heard people talking so much about the Slavic soul, about its incoherences, that they make me believe the Slavs are not human beings but something else! After all, why should the Celts, the Germans, the Semites, the Geto-Dacians be different? Mysticism? There is plenty! Just look at Semitic bigotry! And when it comes to quarrels and rebellions, what better example do you have than the Gauls of Vercingetorix

or General de Gaulle's Frenchmen? What are the Slavs actually? What are the Mongols? What are the Norsemen? What are the Illyric-Thracian tribes? You, Doc, who have suffered the consequences of Rosenberg's racist theory, how can you advocate racial discrimination?"

Doctor Rubinstein continued. "You are beginning to grow up, kid, and I'm glad to see that! You begin to cut into my soliloquies and to raise some tricky questions which I don't know how to answer.

"I can't issue birth certificates to peoples, and I doubt that all the Thucydides, Titus Liviuses, and Momsens of history — put together — could do it either. Moreover, one can not give grades for behavior to each tribe with its crossbreeding! I am content just to notice some ways of behavior which alarm me and make me ask myself why things are so bad, when with all that achievement of mind and wisdom trumpeted by all peoples and leaders from all times and places, we could have been by now fed up with too much good living!

"Like Hamlet, I search and try to see what is rotten in Denmark and why. As far as racism goes, I'll be damned if I'll say I am not a racist as long as, by my law, the law of Moses which I embrace and respect, I know that I am part of the chosen people! Unfortunately we don't like it when some people other than us get this idea, i. e., consider themselves chosen, and treat us the way we have intended to treat them. It seems that there is something rotten in this, too!

"Is power welcomed only when I have it? I wonder if nothing is any longer true, right, beautiful, and good when given through someone else's intervention.

"You see, Hamlet wanted only big things like these, but he was a helpless wretch, with procrastinations and doubts which paralyzed him. A too-small engine for a too-big load! All his philosophy is but the whining of the weakling. The grapes begin to seem sour because they are too high and cannot be reached.

"People are like that, too, and there are all kinds of Hamlets among them. It is not I, Moses' tablets or Hitler's *Mein Kampf* which suppresses people! Helplessness lies in these people themselves! In some of them. In others there is strength. Everyone reaps according to the past husbandry of his talent — as shown in the Bible — and according to the answer to a certain call. A striking example is the Gypsy. Since his mother brought him into this world, the Gypsy has carried the violin in his hands. And he keeps playing it until he drops dead of old age! There

is no other tribe with so many fiddlers and guitar handlers. But, contrary to the law of probability, in the entire history of music one can not single out any Gypsy figure to match Beethoven, Mozart, Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn or Rubinstein. Not only that, but the music begotten in the hands and mind of the Gypsy becomes trolled out, barbaric and even ends in lack of taste and obscenity.

"It would be very instructive and interesting if someone were to do a qualitative and quantitative study on different domains of theoretical and professional activity showing the share of different races, tribes and peoples on this nutshell which carries us through space. Yes, it would be rather daring. Even now, in between two latrine jobs, only out of what I have stored in my head right now, I should almost like to give it a try, to see how peoples would be classified in such a study.

"Even if I were to begin by making critical remarks based only upon a few proverbs, I am convinced I would not make any mistakes.

"There are some ways of thinking, acting or behaving which are so peculiar that they can not be generated but by a certain people and by its overall living conditions. Think about the Egyptians, all the Semites, the Romanians, the Greeks, the Turks, the Germans, the English, the Americans and you will find treasures of syntheses characteristic of one and only one of these peoples, like the sound of each individual musical instrument.

"You are young, and I am trying to leave you some idea to remember in case your bones will not rot here. Try at least not to forget; tell others what I've told you. It's going to be interesting, and you don't have to be a racist to do that. You can find grounds for racism only where politicians poke their noses. But this is a different matter, as different and off the mark in the prospect of any man of good faith as the atom of Leucippus and Democritus differs from twentieth-century atomic fusion; or as the fission of the nucleus differs from the Hiroshima bomb or Hitler's rockets differ from the present weapons of the Pentagon.

"Let me illustrate my point! Who could have come up with the saying 'My country is where I live well!' — disregard the fact that you heard it first in Latin — and whom could this saying fit better than the nation of Israel? Likewise, the aristocratic saying 'Let God help the rich because the poor can beg!' could have been coined only in the England of lords and ragpickers.

And who else but the Turks — in the cowardly, arbitrary and punishing atmosphere of the Phanar — could have coined the saying 'Steal one sheep and they'll hang you; steal a flock and they'll talk to you!' Likewise, where could the following saying have been coined and expressed: 'Ivan has no pig to grow and he must not not have one!' ?

"Here is another one: 'It will be better tomorrow! There will be a feast in our lane!' Here is a short one: 'Nothing!' i. e., neither good nor bad, indifference, apathy towards anything that is happening, has happened or could eventually happen.

"A Russian asks another Russian: 'What are you doing?' The other answers: 'Nothing!' In case of disappointment, the answer is: 'Nothing! It will be better tomorrow!' or 'There is still time!' This 'nothing' means tyrannical fate and — at the same time — supreme happiness, beyond good and evil, reconcilement with nothingness, chaos or whole. It is the poetry of the slave lacking willpower when confronted with the blind forces of nature or — on the contrary — with the very conscious forces of a few ambitious individuals. Ivan has found a solution, not mere words! Ivan's salvation out of the horrible want and miserable living conditions — offered by the masters in past shadowy times and by the officialdoms which have succeeded to the present-day 'democracy' — lies in 'Nothing!', 'It will be better tomorrow!', or 'There will be a feast in our lane!' We are dealing here with a mentality, an outlook which could not have become rooted either in England or in Egypt or in the land of the Mongols but only here, in Russia.

"Terrible centuries of toil and frustration, vile and debauched masters have instilled in the soul of the Russian peasant or serf — always abused and oppressed — strong habits coupled with the conviction that any striving for justice is futile. Sooner or later, blind Fate has the supreme authority, and man — i. e., Ivan — can not influence Fate no matter what he does. The resulting attitude? 'Nothing' or 'There is nothing we can do!'

"Ivan's aspirations are vague and confused. Nothing — precisely defined. He does not want anything! The tragedy is that there is no one to help him. Under the sky of the merciful God, he is alone and always in the immense solitude of the plain which the Russians call the 'steppe.' Driven by solitude and despair, cheated and chased by officialdom, Ivan becomes wild and resorts to crime. His life becomes a cursed burden which he tries to forget by getting dead drunk, which turns him into a beast.

"The heroes of Dostoevsky, Chekhov, and Gorky are taken

from this kind of setting, alive as life, overwhelming you with their debauchery and sublime greatness. The live Russian — seen by us in prison and outside as a free man — is a child with a golden heart; merry, tender, and capable of any sacrifice or evil deed. He changes like the weather, sometimes from one day to the next. He comes forth right out of Dostoevsky's pages and out of centuries of oppression. He works by leaps and bounds; he kills himself working and does not care how much he earns (as in Gorky's books); sometimes just for an extra bottle of vodka he works like a mule. But he has whims: Sometimes he could be lazy, sometimes stormy and roaring louder than the winds of the steppe or the thunder of the River Volga.

"A profound mystic and a dreamer, his mind more in the sky than on earth — as Lyubova Dostoevsky describes him — the Russian can not live without God's help. When he has his spiritual and moral urges, he gives up everything and takes to the road towards nowhere and anywhere like a dog running away from his cruel master.

"In any case, his leader can not be a democratically elected president but must be a person chosen by God, an anointed person with a saint's halo. And if his leader happens to have no halo, then the Russian makes one up for him. This has happened in the case of today's leaders of the Soviet Union, which confirms all the assertions made by Dostoevsky's daughter.

"Don't get me wrong. I don't want to destroy anybody as you have accused me. And I don't want to diminish the numerous tribe of the Slavs and of these Russians who flood places all over like a giant mucous-gelatinous amoeba. But out of all I have told you, I want you to understand that this Russian nation could not find the proper leaders. Hence everything the Russian lives with is theory. Yes, theory and dreams! The Russian leaders have been of bad faith, abusive and ready to sink into debauchery and paltriness. Most of the time they have been completely alien to the soul and preoccupations of the Russian peasant. Do you know, kid, what it means to wait? Do you know what it means not to have something permanently, something which you have ardently desired, and to wait, and wait, and wait without ever getting it?

"I suppose you would say 'It doesn't matter! It's just a simple disappointment, a doubt or distrust for which you can curse in disgust!' Well, let me tell you that it is possible that this sour rub leaves marks and a sensitivite predisposition transmitted to the offspring who, in their turn, will transmit — from

generation to generation — all the despair and doubt which have tormented the soul and exhausted the strength. And the tiny, soft snowball of the centuries — after generations — grows into an avalanche.

"Chopped on one side today, cut on the other side tomorrow, wronged and humiliated every day by the ingratitude of those surrounding him and by the severe punishments of his superiors, poor Ivan has been deprived even of the reality of unfulfilled waiting. All he can cling to has been this aimless wait, a continuous longing for something vague and chaotic which could be love or justice or freedom or a mixture of all these plus others which are shapeless — to fill the emptiness of his existence.

"This is how the Russian has come to be a tragic figure, deeply eaten up by a perpetual discontent, driven and poisoned by the disease of melancholy, of vague and unfulfilled longings for centuries!

"But all the repressions and sublimations, all this thirst for fulfillment and happiness has led the Russian to the violent outbursts seen in the debauchery of his drinking sprees, in bloody acts of revenge or unprovoked brutality having no other logic than that of regaining mental balance through an artificial, unnatural euphoria. It is the only way the Russian peasant answers centuries of abuses and oppression.

"I've often seen Russians keeping their fingers crossed and saying, 'O, God! Don't let me ever say that I won't be a beggar or a convict!' This is a kind of wisdom representing the synthesis of all the euphoric moods of the Russian peasant while in prison or wandering through the endless taiga carrying forged papers in order to escape the fury of the authorities and the severity of the laws.

"The perpetually abusive, selfish and arbitrary system of the Russian government has made bloody criminals even out of the most innocent souls. The Russian peasant ended up naively believing that his master had the right to treat the serfs on his property as cows and that the serfs had no right to rebel. But this did not prevent the Russian peasant from killing his master like killing a beast when it came in handy, in the dark of the night. Such crimes happened often, and they were not considered shameful. Under still unknown circumstances, Dostoevsky's father — a boyar or landowner who was both a violent man and a drunkard and used to beat up peasants — was one day found murdered and thrown somewhere on the side of the road, under the carriage he used to travel in. Of course, everybody

mourned and cried for him. Perhaps they even suspected who the murderer was, but nobody could point a finger at him or prove anything.

"As you can see, abuses were answered by revenge. Revenge led to flight, theft, crime and finally prison. And when, from time to time, attempts were made to escape or to revolt en masse, they were followed by punishments such as branding with a hot iron, cutting off the nose, or the Sakhalin peninsula, i. e., salt-mine work for life and an exterminating regimen. The enormities and the exaltation of the paranoics, the desperation of the tired and of the victims — using the same dialectics of masters and oppressors — continue with the same ups and downs, always reversing the parts played. The same dimensions and the same intensity in all I have seen.

"The literature of those times provides us with a profusion of details and with documents concerning the atrocities. What I am telling you is not my own invention.

"As time passed — read Chekhov's *Investigations* and the writings of the Polish chemist Ossendovski — the formulae changed but the system of government stayed the same: illegalities, abuses, and violence. Regardless of his former position or how high he rises on the social scale, the Russian can distinguish only between the weak he oppresses and the powerful he fears. This is the manner in which the Russian authorities of all times have treated their subjects and their superiors: oppression and monstrous measures of repression towards the herd of powerless Ivans, but flattery and hand kissing where biting hasn't been possible. For centuries, the Russians have adopted this kind of attitude from Genghis Khan and his successors, who have oppressed the peoples of these regions for 300 years. Eyewitnesses from modern times, such as Ossendovski (former minister in the Provisional Revolutionary government and for a while President of the Revolutionary Committee for Siberia), told me that the Tsarist civil and military authorities prepared their own destruction with their own hands, and the punishment they received through the Bolshevik Revolution was well deserved. Unfortunately, this punishment fell more heavily on the entire Russian nation, not guilty of the Tsarist crimes.

"The Russian Revolution was born in an intellectual milieu, among selective circles of people, but it was provoked by the Tsar's secret police, by the strictly controlled army, and by the constraints ordered by the Tsar's government. Any protest, any attempt to demand legality, justice, or human rights was

answered by suppression. Any opposition to the excess of punishment and to the incompetence of the officialdom resulted in death by firing squad, imprisonment in the Peter and Paul Fortress, or exile in Siberia. The causes of the protests and opposition did not interest anyone. The leaders were just too busy oppressing people. The Tsarist secret police — the Okhrana — had spies everywhere. By pretending to advocate the most liberal ideas, these spies could infiltrate the most secret cells of the revolutionaries. They even took over the leadership of some revolutionary groups and provoked disturbances and bloody clashes, giving the government an excuse for reprisals. Those not killed during the demonstrations were eventually deconspired and arrested by the Okhrana and banished or buried in the salt mines. Entire gangs of hoodlums and ruffians — having no respect for anything holy and pretending to be revolutionaries — were in the service of the Okhrana.

"After the fall of the Tsar, the same gangs served the Cheka, which later changed its name to the K. G. B. During that sinister period of destruction, from one corner to the other of the Russian colossus, entire villages were devastated with the tacit consent of the new Red tsars improvised overnight. During the terror of 1917 and 1918 in the same capital city — by that time the name had been changed from Petrograd or St. Petersburg to Leningrad — the Red troops were shooting at the masses of people. The only difference was that under the Tsar such incidents had taken place only from time to time while now, under the Reds, they were a daily routine.

"Regarding the Soviet attitude towards the Baltic states, hangings and shootings were being carried out because the Baltics were protesting Russian abuses. The demands for independence of the Baltic states were met with terror. People with any education at all were deported in great numbers to Siberia, as also happened in the Caucasus, the Ukraine and Mongolia.

"This has always been the policy of the strong Russian, of the Russian allowed to control the destiny of others: abuse and massacre. In 1899, the Russian General Gribsky — at that time governor of the region of Amur — had his soldiers push 3,000 Chinese at bayonet point into the River Amur, where they drowned. How can you believe that the Chinese could ever love the Russians? The same can be said of the Poles who experienced Russian savagery and massacres first hand! Unfortunately all the drama and the horrifying repressions which took place in these regions — from the times when the hordes

of Kublai Khan swept across these lands, even until today — are not recorded in history. From the Baltic Sea to the shores of the Pacific, the old-time hordes were succeeded by the Russian clerks, convicts, and colonists who had always been feared. They were called 'the new usurpers of freedom and justice.'

"All Russian governments have always exploited the rivalry and hate among local tribes in order to attain their goals of domination. Wherever the Russians intruded in foreign territories, Russian convicts and colonists, good-for-nothings and drunkards lay in wait around the herds and the land, stole the horses and raped the women. The complaints of the natives were never answered. The Russian authorities worked hand in hand with former convicts, and the natives had no choice but to resort to arms. Repressions followed and the corpses were left on the plain to rot in the sun and wind. There were waves of blood and tears. Like Genghis Khan, the old and the new Tsars massacred everyone who opposed them. After the Bolshevik Revolution, the Tartars ran away southwards to escape Soviet terror. They crossed the Mongol border while the Soviet 'liberators' were setting everything ablaze. For centuries, the Russians extended and consolidated their power. They gave land concessions, built fortresses up to the border of Korea — a decadent kingdom which fell prey to the Russians, the Japanese and the Chinese through traitors in governmental positions and spies disguised as merchants.

"Through Bezobrazov, the Tsar's man, the first step towards the annexation of Korea was taken. The same thing was done in the case of the concession of the railroad through Manchuria, of the entire Chinese province of Fengtien, and of Kirin (also Chinese territory).

"The present Chinese-Soviet conflict has extremely solid causes contingent to the imperialist schemes of Bezobrazov and the above-mentioned concessions, let alone the fact that the Tsar — directly involved in this business — gave the concessioner his support in the form of armed troops. Among other functions, Bezobrazov was the 'great hunting master' of Tsar Nicholas II.

"Though both the Russian steppe and the Ukrainian were sparsely populated, the Russian government colonized the regions along the Amur and Ussuri Rivers with Cossacks by taking advantage of the troubles, irresponsibility and sparseness of the local population with the aim of achieving the same goal. These Cossacks, together with the official police, were the

number-one enemy of the local population.

"To the Far East, too, most of the exiles, sentenced people, and rebels against the absolutist policy of the Tsarist government were sent. Some of these, especially the Georgians and the Cossacks — grouped in armed gangs — used to attack the official food-supply convoys, the post offices, the travelers and — if necessary — even the peaceful tribes. This region was also preferred by most escaped convicts, always ready to take revenge and spill blood. From one corner to the other, especially in time of war or revolution, Russia has always been a strange and vulgar mixture of people who do not know what they want, delirious fanatic revolutionaries, corrupt clerks and officers. Beginning with the Tsar and his court and ending with the most unworthy gubernial administrator, the most monstrous transactions and intrigues were done in the name of Holy Russia. Public money poured into private pockets. Entire trains loaded with freight used to disappear mysteriously and never reached their destinations, exactly as you see with your own eyes happening today in the new Soviet state, called 'the state without exploitation.' Nothing, nothing has changed! The same Russians dying of care for others — for America, France, even backward countries. The same Russians who have nothing to live on! I am referring to millions of Ivans and not to the Kremlin or the detachments of officials and commissars or political officers who have their private shops and special salaries. The paradox lies in the fact that they — those who keep talking — are not the Ivans but the Central Committee, the avant-garde of the Communist Party.

"As a matter of fact, you should know that I don't give a damn about all their misery, but it pricks me to the marrow of my bones and makes me sick when I see them acting like Satan reproving sin. They? Defenders of peoples' rights? They talk about crimes committed by the Americans, about capitalist exploitation, about Hitler's crimes! But what is their guiding morality? By God, this hypocrisy kills me! If they at least denied any kind of morality and took care of their own crimes and banditry, then everything would be in order! But, believe me, in the entire history of mankind I have never come across baser or more perfidious actions than those of the Soviet leaders!

"What can one hope for from such leaders? In what respect is Beria or Stalin or any of the present gods of Russia better than General Gribsky, Bezobrazov or General Count Stockelberg?

"The administration and the present-day party officials build

the same ghost villages out of painted cardboard, with brass bands and with peasants dancing on the roads on which Stalin and the commissions of guests pass exactly as Potemkin used to do for the Empress Catherine. As far as Stockelberg is concerned, he didn't act differently from any Soviet party boss. Does he deserve more condemnation for the fact that the train in which he traveled to Port Arthur had two extra cars exclusively for his wife? One car for her personal milk supply and the other for her comfort, for her to sit in under a special roof which was watered by a group of soldiers whenever it was hot outside so as to maintain a temperature and humidity agreeable to milady. In what respect was this arbitrary rule of whims of the old-time leaders worse than Beria's sacrileges of today? What have the new communist tsars given us? The prisons you've just seen? General hunger? Destruction of every nation in the name of national right to self-determination, which exists only on paper? Where are the Lithuanians, the Romanians from Bessarabia and Bukovina, the Tartars from the Crimea, the Cossacks from the Don, the Georgians from the Caucasus? Where are the Germans from East Prussia and the Poles from the entire eastern part of Poland which the Russians have grabbed? Where are the populations of the Far East? Where are the Komi and the Nenets from the Arctic Circle? Do the Soviets have the courage to accept a United Nations commission led by us and not by them?

"What could one have hoped for from the former leaders of Russia? What can one hope for from the present wielders of Soviet power? With only their kind of leader, what could one expect from mankind?

"Some time ago, St. Petersburg was the heart of intrigues, quarrels, excesses of power and false reports which brought about promotions and decorations. Today Moscow has taken its place. Different people, same methods. Well, a little bit more refined, with the help of dialectic sophistry. As with the jugglers at the fair, now the unexplainable can be explained! What is not, is; and what is — the stringent reality — is not!

"If meat prices go up, this is for the benefit of the people because it represents an improvement of the price and consequently of their well being! And if somehow the meat disappears completely from the butcher's, it is because — according to statistics — the consumption of meat has diminished as a result of medical advice. Science has proved that excessive consumption of meat adversely affects public health. Now, man — the most precious capital of the Soviet motherland — must be educated

in such a way as to stay in shape and to contribute to the rise of the average life expectancy.

"Today the Soviet government — like the Tsarist regime before the Revolution — grabs foreign territories. As in the past, the present-day Russians do not frisk about either because of good management or because of superproduction, but they keep expanding in order to bless others, too, with the chaos at home. It reminds me of the tale of the lunatic who was given a bushel of millet to count the kernels and asked for another bushel so he could take the kernels out of it, put them in line with those from the first bushel, and keep count in this manner. The same with the Russians: They want to bless the entire globe with their own system of government! They still dream about the Bosphorus, about the Mediterranean, about the Suez Canal, about world hegemony. For the time being they have tightened their grip around the neck of the Baltic states, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Romania. And who knows what other thoughts and appetites will stir them? The Danube Delta has been a lump in their throat for a long time! At least they should do something about their own huge stretches of land! But the way they manage them does not even pay for their own food! They who used to be the world's granary during the Tsar's time, today are importers of wheat! Yes, wheat from the United States! They who have plenty of rivers, lakes and seas import canned fish from the United States! And they have been fishing from father to son!

"Have you seen what they have in their foodstores? American powdered milk, American powdered eggs, American matches, canned meat in fat from America. The ships harbored at Arkhangelsk are loaded with timber from America. But what is there not from America? And you have heard with your own ears how they curse the Americans! You've seen it with your own eyes. Even you, yourself, are here charged as an American spy.

"You've heard what they say at 'lectures' about those criminal Americans, about the miserable, precarious life under capitalist exploitation. You've heard them bemoaning the fate of the entire human race! You've seen that in all their slogans written on walls, they claim that, very soon, they will equal and surpass the Americans in productivity and high technology. They who don't even have linden bast moccasins to provide for their entire population! They who eat stinking camel meat, several months old! They who distribute to their own population only the heads

of the salted fish — and bran boiled in seal fat! They whose children I have heard bragging that they have factories which make lemons!

"For whose selfish glory are all these lies and social disasters? For what lofty aims, so much hunger and death in this part of the world? The Tsar is gone!

"For centuries, the huge Tsarist empire incorporated countries and peoples through cunning and violence. The present Soviet leaders keep and expand the inheritance by means of diplomacy and because of the stupidity of the Western powers, though at first the same Soviet leaders raged against Tsarist oppression! By lying — like cowards and hypocrites — they have continued the century-old spoliation! Their present policies have rekindled the hate of the peoples of the world. The mild lamb has turned out to be a disguised wolf and their doctrine of the golden age of mankind, the most sinister joke ever played by one of our people against mankind!

"I know there is much cunning in the way our people conduct business. I know we are capable of devising needs for people, needs which sometimes are useful just to our commercial dealings or to our interests and not at all to anybody else. Sometimes our goods are — if not unwholesome or of poor quality like the literature of Feuchtwanger, Upton Sinclair or Uri Benador — then of indifferent quality. But I also know that when you enter the shop of a Jew to buy toilet paper and it happens — just like that — that he does not have it in stock for the moment, he will talk you into buying something from him instead of leaving the shop empty-handed. If he does not have the toilet paper, he will convince you at least to buy sandpaper, claiming it is as soft and as safe to use. I'm telling you, I have seen many things in my life but such sandpaper as the stuff sold by Karl Marx to mankind, I have seldom seen! Smart Jew! And I — blockhead — have awakened too late, and now I am paying the tribute alongside you. You see, I am a doctor, not a businessman. As a German Jew, I thought running away from Hitler was still good business, but both the Lithuanians and I got into even worse trouble! It was the business of a Jewish loser! Something worth telling even to dead people! My stupid fate has driven me here, in the midst of this endless tragedy. My sympathy towards the Lithuanians — with whom I once lived — brought me the enmity of the Soviets and was the cause of my arrest.

"Russia has not changed at all. She is still the same huge cesspool — about which the chemist Ossendovski used to talk —

into which Europe and Asia have thrown the worst ingredients from different races, hiding them under a thin layer of civilization, garnished with the romantic colors of dialectic lies.

"The Russians stirred hate in Manchuria, China, and Poland, in our Lithuania, in your Romania, even in their own homeland, and wherever they showed their true face. The network of their secret police prevents any undistorted news from reaching Russia. The only earthly heaven is here, in Russia, and the rest of mankind moans under the burdens of want, exploitation and lack of culture! The media sings praises to Soviet wisdom and well-being! The last peasant must be convinced that the salvation of mankind lies in the sacrifice and renunciation demanded from him. Revolutions all over the globe, as well as national liberation movements — no matter where they start — must be helped because they are the main means of destroying capitalism.

" 'And who else if not us — the first country in the world which freed herself from the exploitation of man by man — could help the rest of the world?' says Zhdanov, the present great ideologue of the Kremlin. They, the world's matadors! The defenders of people's freedom, of human rights! How easily the Ivans let themselves be convinced by empty, stereotypical words yelled out through loudspeakers installed everywhere! Even now, in this terrible want, the Russian temper flares up as abruptly as ever! Hope sparkles in it, and it is inflated by the gigantism which drives it. But at the first stumble, it is deflated like any balloon! Abruptly and violently like a thunderbolt wasting millions of volts! Its blinding light is gone and the immensity of darkness becomes darker, deeper! Exactly like under the Tsar! The same ragtag millions — described by Maxim Gorky — and the same rivers of blood and destruction peculiar to the Russian temper. The same massacre troops — but under different leaders — as in 1849 in the Baltic states or in 1918 and 1919 in Poland, East Prussia and Galicia. Those who took part were not only simple Ivans but also Russian noblemen and military officers.

"The Asiatic atavism — relic of the merciless wars among the nomadic tribes of the past — continued to have its say as, for example, in the atrocities between Whites and Reds during the Revolution of 1917, atrocities committed by both sides. It was like a bloody tide — as the eyewitness Ossendovski points out — in which the Russians competed among themselves in savagery.

"The propaganda peddled in those times — as well as today —

among life's illiterates, desperados and oppressed has done nothing else but feed the criminal and destructive instincts through which the creative energies have been and are being mercilessly destroyed.

"Who can believe the Soviets any more? In the camps you have passed through, you have seen as I have seen how the present Soviet government allies itself with criminals and panderers, in order to win the game, exactly as the Tsarist government did in the old times. Bullshit! This is what they call politics! It's like pulling off the string of your underwear pants and hunting lice with it! They try to stir up trouble — by using hired hands — in order to take reprisals whenever they want to get rid of undesirables! The Tsar's government used to do the same! A simple change of masters with the same scenery! Indeed, essential change was too costly just for the sake of the idiots who fought and died for Russia. Russia lost people and fortunes and was perhaps rolled back a few centuries. The Soviets have learned nothing from history or from the Romanovs except to persist in negativism. They have long forgotten the sentiments of individual freedom, social justice and responsibility for the public good — for which they have made the world rebel!

"The atavistic thirst for power and glory quickly darkened the minds of those who have longed for freedom, justice, equality, beauty, goodness and truth. But the saddest thing is not that human beings have died for this cause but that for centuries to come, the trust of the entire human race in the possibility of moral improvement of the world community, in peaceful coexistence on earth has been killed. When I say this, I am thinking of real human beings, not of people descended from apes. Perhaps the latter have already forgotten that they have cracked the nut with the stone which they have — a moment ago — just dropped from their paws."

Here Doctor Rubinstein paused for a moment. The historical excursions and the multitude of names and quotations from historians, philosophers and men of letters — in which the doctor entangled himself to prove to me the continuity of the ringworms of the past through the Soviet present — made me understand better what he had done in 1939. One thing is sure: Rubinstein succeeded in inoculating my mind with the venom of pessimism regarding the better fate of mankind.

He continued: "The world means wickedness, i. e., only lies and self interest; profiteering and cliques. From the beginning

of this modern world, mankind — we find — has sweated and is sweating to maintain palaces, give out guns, machines, uniforms and glory to its oppressors who are evil, more evil or excessively evil from one country to another or from one corner to the other. These oppressors never show compassion for the worries of the multitude for which they claim to sacrifice their hours of rest. They keep running from one council meeting to the other, always conspiring! Strange business! Mysterious, outrageous business! Everything ends up in an extraordinary consumption of energy and sweat, only to inflict pain upon others and to curtail their rights, which are mischievously declared sacrosanct by the oppressor and which the same oppressor claims to stand up to defend."

Under the baffled eyes of Europe — even after Stalin's eviction from the Kremlin mausoleum — Moscow's gendarmes still hold the handle of the same Stalinist frying pan. Showing total contempt for world public opinion, the anti-Stalinist crocodile, Nikita Khrushchev has gone so far as to erect the Wall of Shame in the middle of Berlin. Disregarding the elementary rights of the individual and of nations, under the complacent eyes of the West, Khrushchev's successor — Leonid Brezhnev — took a most unpopular course of action: The 1968 reoccupation of Czechoslovakia under the pretext of liberation. Later on, in 1979, the same Brezhnev ordered the invasion of Afghanistan after signing a "friendship treaty," with that country. Likewise, the anti-Brezhnev crocodile, Mikhail Gorbachev, has been crying for reform while worshiping the Berlin Wall.

The crocodiles are still on the watch! On their list they have not omitted Poland, which for centuries has paid in blood for her desire to remove from around her neck the fraternal arm of Moscow's love. One needs only to mention the year 1863 as well as the 10,000 Polish officers murdered in the Katyn forest after Russia's Uncle Joe had fraternally divided Poland with Germany's Adolf. Jaruzelski should remember this! And the newly installed leaders of the 'socialist fraternal states' should read with wide-open eyes the history of deeds done before their rule.

Dr. Rubinstein continued: "Moscow has not forgotten the splendor of Byzantium, and, since glorious Rome is dead, it might well turn out that 'all roads lead to Moscow!' What a wonderful dream! The all-time dream of the Tsars and of the Russian intelligentsia — taken over and disguised under the mask of 'proletarian internationalism' — nurtured by the conviction that the grafting of the modern Soviet institutions will make Holy Russia the ruling power of the world. Dostoevsky — who understood

that the Russian possessed just the Byzantine culture (this culture cut short, too, by the fall of Byzantium to the Turks in 1453) — always opposed this conviction. During the nineteenth century and through the beginning of the twentieth — as Dostoevsky remarked — Russia was living in the fog of the mystical, naive ideas of the fifteenth century, ideas which she had borrowed from Byzantium without improving them at all.

"It became clear that the introduction of West European rationalism in such an unprepared environment could only result in anarchy and disruption. Onto what substance could the Western institutions and theories have been grafted? All Dostoevsky's writings — especially *Crime and Punishment* and *The Daemons* — prove his clairvoyance and lucidity. He was the only Russian writer who understood that the Russian peasants (actually serfs) could not forget the cruelty of the noblemen and would distrust any new ideas introduced by the Narodniks or Populists. He wrote: 'The nineteenth-century European institutions do not suit the Russian people. Brotherhood in misfortune has changed my ideas. I live with the conviction that the new ideas of the West will plunge this country into the abyss, transforming her into a republic of brutality and ignorance. As in the case of the West, which was taken out of the darkness of the Middle Ages by the Byzantine refugees, Russia must further develop the Byzantine culture which took root here in the fifteenth century.'

"The regime of legalized injustice in Russia provoked a disgust for work, for life, for any activity. Deprived of any freedom and of normal living, the Russian accumulated flaw after flaw — regardless of his social status of peasant or intellectual. The question is who has suffered the most, the uneducated man or the intellectual? The former is a degenerate; the latter shows dangerous symptoms of a disease which mars his spirit.

"In the only issue of the publication *Journal of a Writer*, in January, 1881, addressing himself to the Russian intelligentsia, the same Dostoevsky wrote, 'You consider yourselves Europeans, but you have not the least education! You claim to civilize the people with your European utopia, but the people are much more civilized than you through Christ, who is worshiped by them, and who has saved the people from the grip of desperation. Do not despise the people! Forget that they have sometimes been your slaves! Respect the people's ideas, love what they love; admire what they admire! If you continue, in your stubbornness, to despise the people's beliefs and continue forcibly

to inoculate into their minds the European institutions (which they can not understand and will never adopt), the time will come when they will reject you, turn away from you, and look for other leaders! You want a European parliament to enact laws without asking the consent of the people. You will not be able to rule Russia because you do not understand her! Let the people make their will known. Give ear to the humble words of the delegates; try to understand these words and to give a legal, juridical form to their simplicity.

" 'But if you continue to isolate yourselves from the people through idle European talk, you will end up in darkness, blundering into each other. And instead of enlightening Russia, you will wake up with bumps on your heads.

" 'Europe hates and detests you. The Europeans know that the Russian people will always be different from them. It is not Europe but Asia we must work with because we Russians are as much Asians as we strive to be Europeans. The error of our policy lies in the fact that we have been striving to convince Europe that we are Europeans. All we have managed to do is earn their loathing.

" 'Our future is in Asia! In Europe we are just Tartars! In Asia we are civilized people. In Europe we are just intruders. In Asia we can be masters! We can thus become aware of our civilizing mission which will give us the dignity we need so much today when we are just a caricature of Europe!

" 'Asia is waiting. The civilization offered to Asia by England is too sophisticated, and Asia can not adopt it, especially because England offers it despisingly; and nothing hurts the Oriental deeper than being despised because nowhere in the world is the sentiment of dignity more acute than in the Orient!'

"Of course, this political testament which Dostoevsky left to be learned by the Russians could not and can not yet be understood by a stubborn leadership, always hypnotized by Europe, even today, after this leadership has armed itself with the last acquisition from the arsenal of European rationalism: the materialist dialectics.

"Taking into account the realities as shown by different great travelers and explorers of our times, I could say that Dostoevsky's conclusions are too lenient: The Russians have shown too much of their teeth in Asia, too, where they have been as despised and adversely regarded as in Europe.

"Siberia — this country of wonderful, rich, attractive landscapes — has become uninhabitable for normal people due to

the interference of the Tsarist governments. Gangs of adventurers and criminals — working hand in hand with concessioners and government clerks — managed to destroy the strivings of the pioneers by their ruthless cunning and by alcohol. Instead of producing goods out of riches, they have spread among the natives the unhealthy, amoral restlessness of the metropolis which sent them.

"The weak Russian culture, mixed with the worst elements of the Far East, has had its say here, too, and spread Moscow's intrigues, alcoholic trance and unhealthy blood even to the Pacific and the Bering strait.

"During his information-gathering travels, Professor Stanislas Zaleski wrote in his personal notebook: 'A truly wise and humane culture could make this region with its mountains, lakes, rivers, forests and plains a source of true happiness for mankind!'

"Organized gangs of ruthless merchants, adventurers and criminals — ready to rob, plunder and murder — webbed all of Asia, making the natives rise against all Russians.

"A unique slogan kept driving the Russians to the most inhospitable places: 'We must grab whatever is thrown in our way by circumstance!' Without scruples, the Russian merchants steal, cheat, get people drunk, kill, and destroy like Cortez' Spaniards in Mexico, the Anglo-Saxons in America or the white prospectors of the Polar Circle (as described by the Czech writer Jan Weltzel in his *Life of the Eskimos*). The only difference is that the Siberian tragedy is surrounded by silence. It has no history. No one cared much about this side of the world, and the protests of Dostoevsky, Chekhov, Zaleski, Weltzel or Ossendovski — in their time — were not taken into consideration. There is no such thing as a history of those places. Not only Muscovite officialdom but even the Russian merchants and prospectors looked upon the Siberian natives as less than human beings. Who — for instance — knows anything about the quiet, hard-working Orassons, who made their livelihood by hunting the sable? What is left of them today?

"The same crimes for furs, amber, the miraculous roots of the ginseng tree as for the gold of Montezuma or for the sea outlets at the Baltic, Panama, Suez, the Dardanelles or Gibraltar! The only difference: the Russian cover-up! People never talk about Russian alcohol and stabbings in the back! This criminal habit was the cause of the disappearance of entire tribes in Siberia, Mongolia, and Kamchatka, and on the isle of Chuchi. Where are the tribes of Golzes and Yakuts, the hairy Ainu from

the Sakhalin peninsula? What have the Tsarist Russians or the Soviet Russians to say about these disappearances from the record of history? What have the Russians to tell us about their own 'Drang nach Osten' and about this sinister tale of genocide? What have the Muscovite merchants and prospectors to tell us about this? What details could the local historians give us about the Kirghizes from the famous steppe whom the Russian governments chased away from their pasture lands, giving them to Russian colonists who had so much land of their own at home that a full day of travel was often required before one could come across a household? Here and there, in their journals, the travelers of those times marked down the violent disputes between the natives and the Russian usurpers. But history and historians keep silent about this Russian and Soviet policy of aggressive colonization in spite of the fact that the prisons and the mines of Soviet Asia are shaken by the groans of the Kirghizes sent there by the courts of the administrative districts under charges of rebellion against public order.

"All over the land, the indigenous tribes and nations defended their plains and herds or flocks — guns in hand — and could never understand why they were being imprisoned and deprived of their elementary right to life, a right which the Tsarist and Soviet governments used to preach in published books. The sequel to this continuous state of tension — known and maintained secretly by the Moscow governments — was an immoral life, full of hate and mutual cruelty. Thus the Russians — coming from the West — rekindled everything that had become dormant and numb in the souls of the Asians, centuries after the passing of Genghis Khan. But nobody has the right to criticize the central authorities or to utter a word about these atrocities. The rulers' police are on the watch and stifle everything while historians — throwing their cloak over the shoulder against which the wind blows — write according to the government-ordered cliche and quietly ruminate over their glory and fun. During this time, from the Baltic to the Pacific, in Korea, the country of the warm mornings, and from the Crimea to Novaya Zemlya, people and nations are taken to work at bayonet point in most unhealthy places, securing the building of new industrial and strategic centers for events the Soviets fear but secretly and very consciously prepare for, hoping unconsciously that these events will not bring their own downfall.

"But the gravest thing is the distressing, maddening atmosphere in which Russian officialdom of all eras has exercised

its prerogatives. The majority of the envoys and official representatives are people spiritually tormented, lacking will power and incapable of understanding the facts and making decisions of their own. Somewhere near the edges of the lands taken by force was where these kinds of people ended up: All those who had opposed the man who had the central power or others who — grouped in gangs — knew how to whisper in his ear their personal interests and grudges dressed in the garb of high reasons of state. As will happen even during our time with almost all the officers and the entire army sent to the West, with our old pal Molotov, and with the jolly tourist Khrushchev. Likewise, other outcasts will follow present-day Soviet deities thrown into the same dregs of life. If necessary, they too will be taken out of the Kremlin mausoleum!

"As I was saying, the majority of the official representatives have been and are people in disfavor with the authorities, i. e., in one way or another, human wrecks, rejects who — once their lustre and their whip-carrying power are gone — can not find other spiritual, internal resources of their own.

"Since times immemorial, the Slavic multitude has blessed its administration with such unbalanced psychos who — each in his little satrapy and at different social levels — interpret and carry out the orders from the center according to momentary whims — personal, family or otherwise. These worms (representatives of a morally doubtful humanity) — expelled from the glamorous, glittering life of the mainstream intrigues either for stealing public goods or for abuse, intoxication, killings which had not been expressly ordered, or ideological disagreements — are the main actors with whom the tragedy on these stretches of land is played. Like an octopus, these social parasites, recruited from the dregs of all nationalities — mostly people with no morality or dignity, dealing in illicit trade of any kind — stretch out their tentacles and watch over the general decay.

"Having no constructive talents, no artistic sensibility, but given to many degradations sprung from sensuality and impotence, these merchants of souls — incapable of sustained effort and constructive work, wavering between total indifference and bloody banditry — practice what can only be called the basest and most degrading activities for human and social dignity." Here Doctor Rubinstein ended his comprehensive lecture.

Indeed, half way into the twentieth century, inside Russia, which calls herself European, in front of us prisoners, capitalizing upon his privileged status as a young, virile male, a K. G. B.

first sergeant, nicknamed Sapcuta, brags about his ability to take advantage of the women of the village in which our camp is located by sharing a woman's bed just for one night, playing the giddy goat under the sheets where for a long time — because of the war — no man has been.

"I go for the most beautiful, the youngest, and the one who gives me the most," he brags, producing from his enormous bag a nice brown chicken and a bottle of vodka. And in order to convince us that things were going his way, he proved it to us every day. "This is only a deposit! And if by this evening I do not get a larger share from somewhere else, I cut the night in shorter or longer parts according to desire and demand.

An Estonian woman, a Russian, a Romanian, a Lithuanian woman, all given forced residence in Siberia after their release from a Soviet death camp. Vorkuta, 1954

Sometimes I make myself harder to get. How could I otherwise manage with 350 rubles per month when, you know, brown bread costs 10 rubles per kilogram," he said. Then he yawned, feeling sleepy, gave orders to the soldiers on guard, and disappeared behind some birch trees to recover his used-up energy.

Right in the middle of the twentieth century I witnessed the bragging and the ability of another "chief" exactly like those who, in the times of Jan Weltzel or Fyodor Dostoevsky, used to get sable and silver fox furs and other rarities from the

natives for just a bottle of vodka. Right in the middle of the twentieth century and in the middle of the war, the colonel commander of a prison camp recruits his son on the spot and makes him a driver and a social copulator competing with Sapcuta. Right in the middle of the twentieth century, the Soviet commissar Terlesky smears with crude oil — the old sign of whoring and dishonor — the gate and fence of the home of his professional colleague — Gorbacheva — because she did not answer his youthful advances. Later, at his first opportunity, in order to revenge his rejection, he steals her pad of secret documents. The new man of the century, Terlesky the commissar — in his free-love morality — behaves like his peasant ancestors demanding chastity and virginity in spite of the fact that in front of his subordinates he rages against superstitions and prejudice with arguments borrowed from the book of the god of gods, Joseph Stalin — embodiment of the last and highest stage of development of the materialist dialectic outlook.

THE FATHER OF THE THREE SONS

In barrack 1, Death Camp 7, Uncle Verdes' duties of cleaner-caretaker — to which he had been lately assigned — were taken over by a Latvian from a place near the Estonian border. He had been a good friend of Alfons Berzinis, the speed skating gold medal winner at the World Skating Championships in Oslo, Norway, in 1939. He had also been a friend of the Estonian Tarant, the historian and manager of the Folk Museum of Tallin (capital of Estonia). This Latvian, serving 25 years — like everyone else in this inferno — had his own story to tell.

"I am of Latvian origin and the first one in our family who ever dared — without asking for my parents' permission — to marry an Estonian girl since my native village was close to the Estonian border. The offspring of our happy marriage were three boys. Right now I think none of them are left alive, and this is the cause of my terrible suffering.

"From ancient times, due to our geographical position, many tried to hurt us, each in his own way. My first-born son was drafted into the Red Army immediately after the incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union. Later I heard he had fallen somewhere on the front, around 1943. My second-born son enrolled as a volunteer in the German S. S. troops, and I later found out that he had fallen in the battles in Kurland.

"At home I had only my third son, who was of a special mettle. Nothing could thrill him! Neither Soviet nor Nazi propaganda could devise a way to catch him in their webs. The only people who managed to attract him were a bunch of young nationalist Latvians organized in a secret group. They found the way to excite him and to make him join their organization. This organization fought with everything at their disposal: first against the Soviets, then against the Germans and then again against the Soviets. Its members wanted a free, independent Latvia, and each of them was ready to sacrifice his own life if necessary.

"My third son was 14 years old when his eldest brother was drafted into the Red Army. To my astonishment, it was my youngest who suggested to his eldest brother that he should desert, but the eldest — I do not know the reasons, perhaps he thought he had it made or perhaps out of fear — refused and advised my youngest to come his way. My third son laughed and told his brother that he would regret his decision and the fact that he ignored his youngest brother's advice.

"Whenever we came to talk about my first-born son, my third son found a way to avoid discussion or pretended not to have noticed it.

"When the German troops occupied the Baltic states, my second son was among the first to enlist as a volunteer in the S. S. troops, about which he was enthusiastic. After a while he was wounded, decorated and advanced in rank. He seemed very happy with his decision to join the S. S.

"As parents, we were pleased that our sons were happy, but, in our minds, we were worried about their future. However, we never expressed our inner suffering openly — even by a word or by our countenances.

"The only one in our family who always had something to say was my youngest, who started to reprimand my second son every time he used to come home, trying to convince him to desert from the S. S. troops and join the Latvian freedom fighters. All this was being said jocularly and laughingly, but, in fact, he was rather serious about it. One day, my second son — apparently fed up with this — told my youngest to put an end to this kind of talk; if not — he said — he would report him to the S. S. and he would be locked up or sent to hard labor in Germany.

"From that day on, the brotherly love between my two sons cooled completely. Moreover, they avoided each other as much as possible. As their father, I was suffering very much seeing

that my children did not get along with one another and, little by little, I lost control over them and their ways of life. However, I consoled myself and got used to the thought that, from time to time, two of my sons were with me together, especially since lately I did not know anything about the whereabouts of my oldest son.

"But the one who suffered the most was my wife. She revealed her suffering every night, as she prayed in front of the icon, after everyone else had gone to bed. By this time the news came out that here and there the German troops — later on, the Soviet troops, too — were being attacked by groups of partisans. It was not by mere chance that whenever these attacks took place, my youngest son was never at home.

"The war ended, and hard times soon came upon us. It was a time when the K. G. B. gathered all those who had collaborated — more or less — with the Nazis and all those who had children or relatives who had collaborated with the Nazis. They got me on account of my second son, who had been in the S. S., but Fate rescued me because my first-born was a commanding officer in the Red Army. (When the Germans were in Latvia, I was supposed to be deported to Germany to do hard labor because my eldest son was in the Red Army. However, since my second son was a volunteer in the S. S., I was spared.)

"My youngest son was seldom home, especially since the beginning of the massive deportations during the winter of 1945 and the spring of 1946.

"In the summer of 1946, my neighbors brought me the news that one of the Soviet shipments of 'traitors to the Soviet motherland' had been attacked by a group of partisans and the prisoners set free, and that my youngest son had taken part in the attack; moreover, he was said to be one of the leaders of that group of partisans.

"This news was confirmed after only a few days when the K. G. B. took me away and questioned me thoroughly, asking me to tell them all I knew about my youngest son and his whereabouts. They released me after a few days but, from time to time, they called me in for questioning and released me again. Meanwhile my youngest son found out about the desperate situation I was in and sent word to me to meet him. At the first meeting, I found out in detail — I never expected him to be capable of this — about the true, holy mission he had taken upon himself for the freedom of Latvia. It had all begun while he was a schoolboy, with distributing leaflets or placing posters,

and it eventually grew into armed ambushes against Soviet military convoys. His advice and encouragement had always given me strength, but I had never asked him, and I had never known, where his hideout was. The partisans' strikes against the Soviets intensified day by day. My son became better known and more popular because he instilled much fear in the Soviets in Latvia, in Estonia and even inside Soviet territory.

"Following a heavier ambush by the partisans, the K. G. B. considered it fit to square accounts with me. A few months

The "Baltic Orchestra" on the stage of Death Camp 2, Mine 7, Vorkuta. (From left to right: first accordion player, the German Fritz Meisel. The fourth person is the conductor, Rolf Weber, also a German; the others are all Baltics.) Vorkuta, 1954

earlier, I had lost my wife. After a prolonged disease, she had died — mostly because of her longing for our children.

"For three months I had been under investigation, and each time the K. G. B. took me in, they beat me and roughed me up in every possible way. My condition became so bad that I hardly knew who I was any more. The same questions asked by them, the same answers given also by them were every day

and night impressed into my mind until, at last, I did not know myself whether what I said was right or wrong. One day they took me in front of a superior Soviet officer, who told me, laughing, that — to my luck — all that I had confessed up to that time was true. He added that they had verified my statements in detail and that in a few days I would be released after signing a statement — the famous statement given to you all typed up by the K. G. B. — that you had not seen anything, did not know anything, and that nothing had happened to you! If afterwards you dare squeal a word, you may be sentenced under the charge of disclosing 'secrets of the Soviet state.'

"On the way back, they didn't take me to the same cell but to a different one where I had a bed with sheets, some cigarettes and food at discretion on a table. I could not believe my own eyes. Everything had changed overnight.

"After only two days, I was recalled by the same K. G. B. officers, who — after a lengthier discussion — told me that the superior organs of the K. G. B. saw in me — through my sincerity — an accomplished Soviet patriot and that they were assured that I would always be ready to help the K. G. B. in their struggle against the enemies of the Soviet people. My mind was spinning in confusion, and in fractions of a second I had to give them a decisive answer on which on my future depended. Advantages and disadvantages! Had I disagreed with what they were telling me, I would undoubtedly have been forced — sooner or later — to betray my third-born son and my Latvian nation. Unfortunately, the only chance to get away from them was to accept their offer. However, I secretly pledged to myself that if I escaped from them I would immediately join the Latvian freedom fighters to fight side by side with my son.

"Any objection to their offer would have led to suspicion regarding my sincerity, to my prolonged detention and to the discovery of a vulnerable spot in my past (I am sure I had plenty of them) so I could be sentenced and — if worse came to worst — deported to Siberia. So I accepted their offer to collaborate with the K. G. B. and to carry out all the missions which might be assigned to me. They put the agreement on paper. Moreover, they gave me an ID card and a copy of the agreement. From that moment on, I could move more freely inside their investigation center. What surprised me most was the fact that I was taken several times to watch their interrogations as part of my initiation (as they told me).

"One day I was told that I would go back home and that

a K. G. B. truck — going in the same direction — would take me to the nearest locality. All my personal belongings were returned to me together with a letter of recommendation to the regional K. G. B. chief. Armed with all my belongings and with a story for friends and neighbors to explain my prolonged absence, I got into the truck after saying goodbye to the 'nice' K. G. B. officer, who swallowed the pill by believing in my patriotism and devotion towards the Soviet Union and the communist cause.

"After I got into the truck, one of the K. G. B. officers asked me if I had a gun on me. Very surprised, I told him that I didn't

The K. G. B. headquarters at 61 Lenin Street in Riga, Latvia

Then he explained to me that our route passed through a forest where very often army vehicles had been attacked by Latvian partisans. He said it would be better for me if I had a gun, and since the time was too short to get one, he gave me a pistol (not to keep but at least until we reached our destination). On the road I ate and drank as much as I wanted.

"Soon we got close to the forest. The soldiers warned us to be very alert during our passage. Everyone had his gun ready just in case, myself included so as not to arouse suspicion. We

were almost half way through that forest when a rain of bullets passed above our heads. All of us — to the last man — got out of the truck and took shelter in the ditch alongside the road. On my left I saw one of our K. G. B. men getting up and raising his hands. Then he fell down dead. The same happened to the agent on my right. The chaos and the echoes of the reports of the bullets were so intense that the entire forest was resounding. With the pistol in my hand, I did not know in which direction to shoot, especially since I could not see anyone around. I figured that the best thing to do was to give first aid — I was thinking like a human being — to one of those who had fallen and who could have been just wounded. Whispering, I informed the K. G. B. captain (who had given me the pistol upon our departure) about my intention. He approved of it and told me that he, too, was going to help.

"He was armed with an automatic weapon. After two jumps, we both were close to the wounded man. As I was trying to turn him over, with his face up, I felt a terrible blow on my head and lost consciousness.

"When I woke up, my arms and legs were tied. I was inside a mud hut, lying on some dry forest leaves. In the light of an oil lamp flickering against the wall, I could distinguish the silhouette of my guard, a well-built man with a huge beard, sitting on a tree stump. On his knees he had an automatic weapon and between his lips a cigarette made of newspaper. 'He is a freedom fighter!' I said to myself. I had been saved sooner than I had expected. I turned to the guard and asked, 'Where am I? What has happened to me, and who are you?'

"After staring at me, the man puffed on his cigarette twice and told me in a quiet voice, 'You want to know too much, old man! Well, I shall satisfy your desire before shooting you. First, know that you are here, with me, in the heart of the forest, you dirty K. G. B. dog! You are the only one who is still alive! All the others have been shot like rabbits. We are the people who fight for the liberation of Latvia, for our national independence. And let me tell you one thing: Do not bother me any more with your questions because if you do, I shall tear your mouth to shut it up for good!'

"I replied, 'Forgive me, my friend, but you should know that I, too, am Latvian and, on top of that, I am not a K. G. B. agent but a detainee. My son fights in the ranks of the partisans. Therefore, I pray you, let your commander know that I should like to talk to him.'

"After listening to me, he said in a jocular manner, 'If you're telling the truth, well, I shall let him know that you're here. But God have mercy on you if you have lied to me! I shall take your soul and give it to the dogs!'

"Then he got up lazily and went out of the hut. I overheard him whispering to someone else; then I saw him reenter the hut and sit down in his place without uttering another word. After a period of time which seemed an eternity to me, two fierce-looking men entered the mud hut and told me that if I truly desired to talk to the commander, I should tell him about my son, whose name and deeds were well known among the partisans.

"They cut my arms and legs loose and took me out of the mud hut. I indeed realized that I was in the middle of the forest, in some kind of camp, but I could not very well distinguish what it was because it was dark outside. They fetched me a pail of water to wash my hands and especially my face, which was covered with coagulated blood. I thought I looked awful. Then I was taken into another mud hut — larger than the first — where the partisans' commander was waiting. Like everyone surrounding him, the commander was armed. They all had beards and were wearing different kinds of civilian and military clothes.

"After I sat down, I told him the story of my entire life from beginning to end. Of course, not intentionally but due to emotion, I forgot to tell him anything about the K. G. B. papers and ID which I had on me. When I realized this, I said to myself that I was going to tell it only to my son.

"They seemed to take my story for granted and asked me what the passwords were for my eventual meetings with my son and where and when I was supposed to meet him. I told them everything, and they carefully put it down in a report. It is interesting to note that I did not become suspicious at that time. Only after years of reflection did I realize that all the procedures of questioning and recording were K. G. B. style.

"After completing my statement, one of the aides suggested that the chief search me 'a la russe' just in case. 'You never know,' he said.

"I am sure that at that very moment my face turned pale because one of them said, laughing: 'What's the matter with you, old man? Aren't you feeling well?'

"I was feeling all right but extremely uncomfortable because my K. G. B. affiliation was about to be exposed. To make the story short, when the K. G. B. agreement sheet and ID were

found, an uproar of curses and blasphemies together with a storm of fists fell upon me.

"Just in case, I started to say the Lord's Prayer. I thought that if I had to die, I should die as a Christian.

"The uproar was soon over, but then it started all over again: other questions, other beatings. The outcome was committed to paper. In spite of my attempts to prove my innocence, they did not believe me any more. The only chance left to me was the encounter with my son with whom I had previously agreed upon a password. To make them believe me, I told them the password, which they promised to use immediately. (I should add here that that password was supposed to be used only under extraordinary circumstances.)

"The questioning had been over for a long time when the forest began to echo with the ringing of gunshots. A terrified partisan appeared and fell on the steps of the mud hut, shouting in a loud voice that the forest was filled with K. G. B. agents and that the camp was completely surrounded. While my legs and hands were being tied up, the other partisans rushed out to join in at the peak of the battle, which drew nearer and nearer. Orders and cries of victory in Russian were being heard — as far as I could judge — near the hut where I stood. Suddenly, a K. G. B. officer carrying an automatic weapon rushed into the hut. To my astonishment, I recognized the man who had fallen in combat beside me not long before (in the first attack in the forest) and to whom I had tried to give first aid. I was going to say something that very moment, but a strong object hit me in the back of my head, and I fell down unconscious. While I was falling, in a glimpse of a second and with a last effort, I opened my eyes once more and — to my surprise -- saw the K. G. B. officer (who had just come in) and the bearded partisan (who had been guarding me) shake hands, laughing and pointing at me. My sight grew dim. It was all over.

"When I woke up, I was lying in a truck, tied up tightly like a parcel. All around me were K. G. B. agents and 'partisans' — whom I had seen before. They were greatly enjoying the set-up show whose main character I had been.

"My former blundering statements shortened the time of questioning. I was sentenced to 25 years.

"Today, here, at Vorkuta, for the first time I have told the story of my life from 'A' to 'Z.'"

While he was finishing his story, one of us asked: "What happened to your youngest son?"

"Well," he continued, "I have not told you the end of the story — perhaps intentionally — because I want to avoid recalling my sorrow. But, as the saying goes, in for a penny, in for a pound! My third son died like a hero fighting for Latvia's freedom. He did not fall into the K. G. B. trap because he realized that my prolonged absence from home and the use of the emergency password smelt of the K. G. B. Metnis, my compatriot — who is present here and who was with my son until he breathed his last — is the only man who sometimes brings comfort to my old age by telling me episodes from the struggle waged by my son, whom I loved very dearly and whom I could not understand then but only now, here in this cursed death camp of the North, in Vorkuta."

GERHARDT ROENECKE, Ph. D.

Gerhardt Roenecke, Ph. D. in engineering — now living in Schwarzwald, West Germany — told me about the feats of the Bureau of Patents and of the Institute of Standards and Inventions in Moscow — feats which resemble those of the Chicago gangsters, of old-style banditry and immorality.

It was the year of grace 1945. Russia — sprung up as a great power nurtured in the greenhouse of Churchill and Roosevelt (following the secret agreements in the Bahamas, at Yalta and Teheran) — was devouring her prey as she used to in past history when, in agreement with other Churchills, Roosevelts, Fuehrers, Kaisers, Sultans, Mandarins or Mikados she had consumed other victims such as Poland, the Ukraine, the Baltic states, Mongolia, Kirghizia, Manchuria, Korea, parts of Romania, etc.

With an infirmity in one of his legs as a result of an accident, Gerhardt Roenecke remained in his laboratory in Dresden, Germany, during the Soviet occupation. He was convinced that, being an invalid without any political involvement in his technical research, he would have nothing to share with the victorious Russians. He brushed aside any fears of encroachment and harassment. As far as the possibility of eventual deportation was concerned, it had never dawned upon him.

Indeed, at first the Soviets let him go about his laboratory business, but after a short time he received the visits of many people and was asked questions.

One of the Soviet visitors said to him, "I am also an engineer." Then he asked him to collaborate by handing over the results

of his laboratory research to be recorded at the Bureau of Standards and Inventions in Moscow, which would eventually pay him a fixed income and a certain percentage of the profits made by selling his inventions.

If he refused, the Soviets threatened him with the sword of Damocles — denial of the right to have his own research laboratory. Mention should be made here that the Soviet information service and the K. G. B. had previously found out that Roenecke was an inventor of some repute, that he had worked on the V-1 and V-2 project, and that his name was linked to many inventions patented by the Nazi government. To make the story short, for the power thirst of the new upstarts, Roenecke was a very useful man: pure gold!

"Since we had no choice," said Roenecke, "my assistants and I kept working, and the results of our research were entrusted to the Soviet Bureau of Patents. But six or seven inventions out of ten were rejected by the Soviets, who replied to us in writing that they were already commonplace in the Soviet Union (of course, due to advanced Soviet science and technology!) in spite of the fact that the technology of the time and the data of our latest experiments could not yet produce concrete results, and consequently they could not be patented because the novelty and the progress offered by our inventions was nil compared to the Soviet counterpart made by their scientists. (As you can see, in a very refined manner and with subtle juggling, we were officially cheated.) They thought they were smart. We thought they were base and mean!

"A new idea was tickling in my head, and I started to work towards its realization. It was a small device, very easy to hide, which could be placed at random near a road, a railway track or any aerial route. This device could signal the presence of any cargo of uranium — a fashionable material in those days.

"Highly delighted with the first tests in their presence, the Soviets were pushing me to perfect the device and to complete the documentation so it could be patented and mass produced. Perhaps they would have benefited from it — in those days of fruitful research and improvement — if they had not sent me a new rejection of another patent of mine, a rejection which played their old record of argumentation: idea already known and even old-fashioned for Soviet technology. 'The hell with these bastards!' I said to myself. How many hopes were crushed in me and my assistants! Then I did what I should have done a long time before: I contacted other tigers operating in the

business jungle, as distinguished from the jungle of the political satrapy in that it leaves some room for man and humanity.

"Everything was arranged, the deal was concluded through signed contracts which were to spare my assistants and myself all future worries for our daily lives. The device was handed over to the representatives of our contractor in the West, and we were to go to Eisenstadt, from where we were supposed to cross the border in a car. But my wife's delay (in spite of all assurances given to us, she could not part — like most women — from the trifles and rags of the household) made us pay with what happened to us afterwards, i. e., with this sad experience in the Soviet Union, without a passport or license, an experience full of unpleasant surprises and revealing the so-called technological progress with which the Soviets used to put down my inventions.

"That very day, after we finally decided to depart on the 2 a. m. train to Eisenstadt — only three hours before we would have left without a trace — the K. G. B. knocked at the gate. My wife, the main culprit, saved herself by running away through the back yard to some acquaintances of ours. My assistants and I were arrested on the spot because we could not produce the device which was being persistently requested from us. We should have had a fake handy, just in case! But one can't expect so much ingenuity from a simple inventor! It seems that the wings of Baudelaire's albatross have always been a stumbling block for earthly things!

"I was tried as a traitor and an American spy, and sentenced to 25 years' hard labor. The same thing happened to my assistants and co-workers.

"Now as then, I still ask myself: Was my arrest a simple coincidence, a sellout, or the result of some K. G. B. shadowing? My odyssey — like yours — was lengthy and full of hardships, sometimes humiliating, but I always enjoyed the live satisfaction of having under my mind's microscope the ill-fated results of stupidity and ineptitude caused by Soviet political blackmail even when it simulated sublime ideas, stolen from all over the world but yet unadjusted to the size and purpose of the theft."

Here, Roenecke interrupted his story.

I met Gerhardt Roenecke on the train which took me to Vorkuta. What impressed me was the personality of this Ph. D. engineer and his account confirming an entire past of protests against a corrupt administration and against a mentality which — from Genghis Khan to this day — pollutes the horizon with

a stink that kills or brutalizes anyone who tries to oppose it.

Doctor Roenecke continued: "Somewhere in Moscow, not far from the Kremlin, there is a building with several levels in which — within the framework of a special institute whose name I could not find out — a few thousand translators work to translate into Russian all foreign-language publications relating to every sphere of human activity. It is here that one can find the source of information regarding the level and the rhythm of development of technology and thought all over the globe. The central office of plagiarism (shameless plagiarism and not genuine inspiration and promotion) of every important idea in the world is also to be found here.

Painting by Julius Stuermer
The young Soviet generation behind the iron curtain

"The work of plagiarism costs more than the inventions of the West, and the number of plagiaristic rejects produced by Soviet industry could drive any American trust into immediate bankruptcy. But who has the heart to understand the bankrupt life of the hundreds of millions of undernourished Ivans who live and work under the iron banner of competing with America? What future is there for the young Soviet generation?

"The multibillionaire state, the Soviet police state which owns the resources and means of production of the entire country, can afford any dumping policy under the protective shield of monopoly and the iron curtain. A tractor can be sold on the

foreign market for only 5 dollars, but on the domestic market a kilogram of bread is sold for 10 dollars, a kilogram of sugar for 15 dollars, and a liter of vodka — the general weakness which gathers the greatest revenue for the Soviet treasury — for 50 dollars. Who would dare call the Soviet government to account? Who would be idiot enough to grumble, knowing that the prisons and the mines of the North are waiting for him? And that before getting there he would have to deal with the K. G. B. ? The way things are right now, one is more or less free and can filch a little bit here, a little bit there because there is disorder and lack of incentive in this 'filching social system.'

"Ivan is smart enough to understand how things are in the Soviet system. Long ago he launched the slogan which is now popular in all the Soviet satellite countries: 'They fake paying us and we fake working for them!'

"Since both of the above terms of the equation are equal, the equation itself remains valid and life goes on! It is a miserable life, but it goes on nonetheless!

"Within the framework of the aforementioned special institute, on one of the levels, there is an equally special 'prison,' isolated from the other areas, a prison where a few hundred engineers and specialists from all fields and from all the nationalities of the world work. They were specially selected from among the deportees, prisoners and detainees in the huge Soviet empire. In this prison I found myself, too, but I can't tell you why and how," continued Roenecke.

"Though sentenced to 25 years at hard labor, one day I was called to the K. G. B. office to sign a 5-year work contract with the Soviet state, among the provisions of which was one regarding release with a full pardon under the condition that the obligations assumed were respected and the success of the assigned work assured.

"I signed the contract and was brought there, where I met hundreds of other 'traitors to the motherland' and 'American spies' like me. The great majority of them had been tricked by the 'Moscow Office for Standards and Inventions' through the same methods."

Here, Gerhardt Roenecke concluded his own story. However, he told me other stories related to this special prison in the heart of Moscow, near the Kremlin. One of his stories regards a color television set brought from the United States by Vishinsky (at that time, the permanent Soviet representative at the United Nations). The Soviet government offered a prize of $ 10,000

to any Soviet specialist or group of specialists capable of making an exact replica of the American set. Since all attempts failed, the prize was raised to $ 50,000 and then to $ 100,000.

Finally the offer was extended to the detainees, too. They were initially promised just a reduction of sentence, then release regardless of the nature and gravity of their crime.

Gerhardt Roenecke — in order to prove his ability — offered to participate in this competition. Very modest and somehow ashamed, he confessed that — in spite of all analyses and measurements supplied by the specialists who worked with him — it was impossible to establish the nature of the materials used by the Americans, and he declared himself unable to copy the technological achievement from across the Atlantic for which the Soviets were competing. (They actually used to brag about this!)

From Roenecke and from another detainee in that special prison in Moscow by the name of Philippe Dejagher — a Belgian chemist, former representative of the Belgian Red Cross in the Soviet zone of Germany — I found out that in 1951 the majority of the detainees used as technical experts by the Soviets refused to work and chose the Arctic Circle experience and the K. G. B. punishments over the atomic bomb, whose eventual dropping was rumored from certain circles in Moscow to the detainees. These experts were also fed up with promises and were terrified by the possibility of a new world war considered imminent by Moscow due to extreme international tensions. All over the Soviet Union, people lived in an hysteria of joy and fear of a devastating war which could nevertheless bring freedom! In that prison — they claimed — the well known Soviet aircraft designer, Andrei Nikolaevich Tupolev, was forced into "retirement" for a while so he could get a taste of Soviet truth.

During the time when the foreign technical experts refused to work any more for the Soviets, two German engineers (whose names I can not recall) were shipped to Vorkuta. They had belonged to the German army engineer corps. Among other things, they told us that they had been part of a group of specialists who had worked on a project for a road across the Bay of Ob — in fact an extension of the railroad starting at Vorkuta and going north of the Arctic Circle and towards Norilsk and Kamchatka. The proposed project had three options: an underground tunnel, a bridge, or a ferry boat.

At the railway station of Chum — a little bit farther south of Vorkuta — the railroad divides into two lines, one of which

crosses the Ural mountains and goes to the city of Salechard on the Bay of Ob. This particular line had been built by the detainees of the famous Death Camp 408, which started the bloody uprising of 1948.

From the Bay of Ob to the isle of Kamchatka — mostly north of the Arctic Circle — the Soviet government started to build the North Trans-Siberian Railroad exclusively with detainee labor but without mentioning it anywhere. The junction with the old trans-Siberian route — Omsk-Tomsk-Vladivostok — had to be made on the banks of the great Siberian lakes which, in their turn, had to be linked to other regions.

All the Siberian taiga was to become a network of railroads, and therefore a lot of new camps were set up near the banks of the great rivers. The project also provided for the construction of industrial centers for future military confrontations with the United States of America. The Soviets had the manpower: at first — if necessary — from the socialist satellite countries and later from all of Europe from Vienna to Lisbon. Western Europe could undoubtedly furnish "voluntary" manpower in the form of new, Leninist shock laborers.

Unfortunately, I did not have the time to find out many other interesting details regarding these two German engineers because, just a few days after their arrival at Vorkuta, they were unexpectedly "invited" to the K. G. B. office. I never saw them again. Regarding such mysterious appearances and disappearances, sometimes even the local K. G. B. administration secretly encouraged the spreading of rumors. Put head to head, these rumors helped one reframe the surrounding chaos and re-experience the corruption, baseness and general sluggishness without degrading oneself.

As a matter of fact even these notes — a mosaic of deeds, thoughts, and events, with giant leaps over the centuries, from Timur and Rurik to Brezhnev and Gorbachev; stretching out over thousands of kilometers in space, from the Baltic to Sakhalin, from Yalta and the Caucasus to Novaya Zemlya; touching upon the bloody roots of Boris Godunov and the angelic appearance of Aliosha Karamazov or the supersophisticated naivete of Prince Mishkin — have no other purpose but to depict the chaos out of which emerged the figure of the centuries-old protester, Ivan without history, Ivan the hungry with the spoon tucked in his boot (or, when he is not blessed with footwear, with the spoon partly showing, shoved between his belly and the heavy belt which holds his shirt tightly around

his waist).

Any logic in this? None! What logic could anyone find in the presence of two skeletons who told me in 1951 that they were the survivors of the huge groups of detainees who had worked on the construction of the Vorkuta railroad, and that they did not know anything regarding the fate of the thousands of fellow prisoners they had met there. The two of them had met again, by pure accident, here at the Arctic Circle where they had been given forced residence after their "release." What logic is there in this?

THE VOLGA-DON CANAL

What logic is there in the Soviet conduct towards Hanzig Ghe, born in 1921, brought to Vorkuta as a detainee from the Volga-Don Canal, built by detainees and deportees and not by Komsomol youths as depicted in a film Hanzig and I saw, a film at which Hanzig curses in disgust?

"The director should have had at least the decency to slow down the pace at which the Komsomolists (in shining new attire) work as if goaded by the devil. Had he done so, the impudence of the film could perhaps have been overlooked. The Soviets' socialist realism can not get the message across. The lively pace of the filmed sequence does not relate at all to the physical exhaustion inherent to the continuous striking of the ground with the spade or pick. By neglecting certain elementary things, the Soviets discredit both themselves and the idea of labor. They become ridiculous in front of those whom they actually intend to convince of the seriousness of their achievements.

"In their zeal to please their masters and in order to assure themselves of a life without want and full of pleasant idling, these artistic lickspittles have nonetheless the great merit of revealing indirectly to the perceptive eye the drawbacks and rottenness which could be sometimes overlooked by the most severe censor. Of course, the master of such an 'artistic' lackey can not be a good master. What a pity that Bergson did not have any experience of Soviet death camps or Soviet achievements when he studied the origins of laughter! He could have discovered other facets of the ridiculous upon which both comic author and actor speculate, and his book would have been more intelligent and more impressive in its length!"

Regarding Hanzig's life, I could find out next to nothing.

However, from his comments — always embroidered with curses and coarse words — one could gather that he was a man who had known hardship, a man full of decency and knowledge. Judging by his outward appearance, he was not worth a penny.

"We worked like animals, shoveling out cubic meters of earth during the daytime, and at night we fell down, crushed by exhaustion and hunger," he said. "Driven by the illusion of the 'real conditional' — if you surpass your work quota for one day, you get three days of rest — which the Soviet propagandists and their informers used to wave before their eyes daily, the detainees grasped more tightly onto the handles of the spades or the picks, engaging in a competition, unaware of their own pending destruction."

In order to build a project of great importance, the Soviet officialdom used to mobilize its great army of propagandists and informers at all levels — sometimes even higher-ranking K. G. B. officers under the disguise of simple detainees; at other times simple detainees reeducated after Makarenko's method whom they kept moving from prison to prison to create a hallucinatory atmosphere and to stir the prisoners' thirst for freedom. This was — of course — followed by voluntary enlistment of the people already hired by the K. G. B. who had to play the game of the officialdom and create the frenzy unleashed by the prospect of freedom and the greed for three days of rest for one day of overwork! White bread! Sugar and bacon! Two courses at lunch! The right to send letters home! The right to receive one 5-kilogram parcel monthly! Five to ten cigarettes a day! The right to go to the receiving room when someone from the family visits you! If your behavior was exemplary, you were promised the right to have sexual intercourse with your own wife — some favor! — and to stay with her for as long as 24 hours, excused from work, and in an official room. (Of course, you miserable wretch, you did not know that during this mating time, you were being spied upon through dozens of specially-camouflaged holes by the lecherous eyes of the guards who — after watching the event — never missed the chance to describe to the entire camp or prison all the awkward intimacy of the 40-kilogram skeleton's futile contact with his wife. Topping all this was the supreme promise of the Soviet government: the unconditional release of every participating prisoner right after the official opening of the facility he had helped to build, of course, only if the entire completed project received the unqualified approval of the political officer and of the detainee who ranked first among

those surpassing their daily work quota! Minds used to become excited, the discussions endless, the prison nights an opportunity for fantastic dreams and insomnia.

But after the enthusiasm for the Golden Country of promises was over, the next forced assignment, i. e., the official assignment, began. Incidentally, this was the way Walter Ulbricht, Ana Pauker and political adventurers of other nations had formed their divisions of "volunteers." Hunger, dreams of grandeur! Everyone had been promised ministerial portfolios, elective representation and deanships. Where these promises did not work, the Soviets resorted to scare tactics and physical terror. This is how the volunteer divisions had been formed; this is the true story of the formation in the Soviet Union of divisions such as "Freies Deutschland," "Freies Osterreich," "Garibaldi," "Polska," "Magyarorszag," "Horia, Closca and Crisan," "Tudor Vladimirescu," etc., etc. But let us retreat from the chaos we got lost in — like Scheherazade's 1001 nights — and take a step back into the hell described by Hanzig and after that, little by little, let us complete the whole with whatever is left unfinished after this Baltic intermezzo. Let us finally finish with Doctor Rubinstein and stay permanently in Vorkuta, which we left to follow the S. S. villain who — by order of the K. G. B. — was trying to kill me. But — as Hanzig used to say — theory does not always work out in practice.

The survivors of this collective madness — let alone the recalcitrant detainees who were moved to special-regimen punishment camps (located in the most arid zones where the treatment of the detainees was very rough) — never had the happy satisfaction of witnessing the opening of the facility they had helped build. The detainees were even deprived of the satisfaction of accusing the Soviet government and its representatives of lying because in a very short time (sometimes as little as a month) before the facility was put into operation, they — that is those among them who survived — would be transferred to some other camps under the pretext that the old camp had to be rebuilt or dismantled altogether. In their place, new slave-laborers were brought in who took care of the finishing touches and put the facility into operation while also being instructed for further exploratory work.

In this manner the Soviet government managed to kill as many flies as possible by one masterful stroke of the hand. If, by any chance, one detainee benefited from the opening of the facility he had helped build, he must have been the favorite of some very influential political officer in whose service he would remain after becoming "a free man with compulsory residence at the Arctic Circle."

Very soon, Hanzig disappeared from my life, too! Ah, how many encounters and partings has Fate destined for me? How many good people and how many scoundrels kept appearing and disappearing into the unknown, living — alongside me — through a destiny allotted by the whims of a police state! Each of these people shared with me his own experience and conclusions and made me richer. It is hard for me to forget them even though some of them died surrounded by God's silence and lie buried under the grass of the earth.

Who can know what happened to this or that fellow prisoner, by whose side I cursed at villainy or with whom I shared some fun caused by a prank or trick played upon some turncoat or upon some official in uniform, wearing a star. Regarding those of us who managed to escape to the Free World, I ask myself: "What have they done with their regained freedom and with their death-camp experience?" Here, far from the Soviet camps, I hear that Doctor Gerhardt Roenecke was appointed head of a West German scientific expedition in San Salvador, between 1958 and 1960, but I don't hear that he has made known to the public the things he experienced in the dark world he has nevertheless managed to escape. And I can't understand him! Has he so soon forgotten the duty he is supposed to fulfill? What mystery has made him keep his mouth shut and knocked the pen out of his hand? What mystery, too, froze the lips and conscience of good Father Leoni, who — in spite of daring to undermine an action of the K. G. B. through his authority — got to Rome?

You — good, wise Roenecke! At Vorkuta you saw death with your own eyes. You were gravely ill with pneumonia but you never shunned danger! Right now you are a free man and keep quiet! Why? At the Arctic Circle, you helped us build our radio receiver and transmitter which linked us with the West. When you were here, you spoke up! Now you keep quiet! Why? When, mistakenly thought to be a physician by the authorities, you were sent to the tuberculosis hospital at Sangorodok near Vorkuta and made to work as a radiologist, you did not hesitate to create spots on the x-ray films in order to confuse the Soviet physicians about the diagnosis whenever you intended to save someone's life. I am referring especially to the Ukrainians whom we, the honest detainees, gave certain missions

to other death camps, to convey the news about the preparation of the strike being organized in Death Camp 2! Why are you silent now?

Dear friend Roenecke! You helped all the wounded during the confrontation at Mine 29! You gave them medical care better than a professional physician because you were also compassionate! You were the main storehouse for all medicine which you yourself could obtain through the most ingenious and clandestine means! We trusted you completely to dispose of this medicine as you thought fit and as your conscience guided you! No one spoke other than highly of you! You were great when very many minds and consciences became weak!

But right now you are silent, and I don't understand why! Please forgive me, but I sincerely hope to see you again so that you can explain it to me! Perhaps the power which made you, Father Leoni, Sansone Stelio, Major Pirelli, and others shut up won't succeed in making me shut my mouth, too! This I can not really believe! Ferry the fool will remain the same as you have known him. Even in your free world — if necessary — I will carry the knife between my teeth, the same knife which I used to carry among the convicts and human beasts of the Vorkuta mines.

WE WHO DID NOT WANT TO LISTEN . . .

I am not going back yet to the interrupted thread of our story! Another face has come into my mind! That of Doctor Joseph Sauer (born in 1907), the respected representative of the Swabian minority from the Romanian province of Banat, after 1944.

I met Doctor Sauer at Vorkuta. He had been deported to the Soviet Union and then sentenced to 25 years in a concentration camp under the charge that he had been the representative of the German minority in the Romanian province of Banat. The wisdom of this man — though questioned by many and even taxed as cowardice — made me think more deeply.

Here is what he told me: "We did not listen to the slogan of Goebbels' propaganda — 'All the Germans must be in Germany!' — when Germany was the main power in Europe and when victory smiled on us! We did not listen because we were bound to the Romanian land by hundreds of years! It was the land for which our forefathers — side by side with all the cohabitant nationalities — had fought, bled, and died. We are

bound to it by our past, our dead; we are bound to it by our ancestors who settled there, by our newborn traditions. And because this land bound us together through future prosperity and well-being, we thought that our main duty at that time was to understand our epoch and to defend our country according to the prevailing spirit of that epoch. Otherwise we risked losing both ourselves and our land.

"The Russians are here now, on our land, and judging by the present-day balance of power, they are here to stay for a long time. There is no doubt in my mind that the Russians will impose their way of life — which I have known through personal studies — here, too. Since they keep stating that they will not impose Communism by the force of the bayonet, I am convinced that they are going to do exactly what they say they will not do! Therefore, the only advisable solution is to anticipate the Russians!"

To the astonishment of the people of Banat, Doctor Sauer proposed that they set up collective and cooperative farms patterned upon the old Slavic *zadruga* or joint ownership of property.

"Unfortunately, no one listened to me. I, a man 50 years of age, came here to the Arctic Circle after being cursed at, reviled, and nicknamed 'Judas the traitor' by every Swabian in Banat. But my prophecy came true. The land could not remain ours except within the framework imposed by the time.

"The Swabian opposition to Soviet 'land reform' led to the destruction of the Swabians in Banat and their deportation and dispersal all over the Baragan plain and the Dobrudja steppe, and even to their imprisonment. Their houses, together with their plentiful lands, were given to the most shiftless gypsies.

"This was a natural policy of the Russians. Since they have come into prominence, they have been doing this sort of thing wherever they happen to pass. From the Baltic to the Pacific, they leave nothing undislodged, exactly as the hordes of the old Mongol migration did. By making use of the local brains and hands, with or without the people's consent — as sometimes happens — the vanquisher's goal can not but be fulfilled.

"I do not know if I shall live to see it," Doctor Sauer continued, "but, in spite of the fact that Germany is a defeated, humiliated country and in spite of the fact that even the Germans in the Soviet-occupied part of Germany do not have a better fate than the Romanians, Hungarians and others, I wouldn't go back to the place I have loved so much! I feel like a stranger

now, with no more rights than a slave in antiquity.

"I am also predicting something else. The time will come when all the Germans deported to the Soviet Union, the Romanian Baragan and Dobrudja plains will ask to go to a Germany which — just because she is not the first political power in Europe — will succeed in attracting all those who have not responded to Goebbels' slogan. If I lived to see this, I would advise all these Germans to go to Germany without hesitation.

"I am saying this with the same frankness with which I have prescribed to them land collectivization as the only remedy to the coming of the Russians. I am saying out of conviction that I do not think anyone would desire to relive the humiliation of the years 1945, 1946, and 1947, the deportations and abuses you have seen and heard about here at Vorkuta, and so many other things.

"As far as I am concerned, my boy, I am sick and tired of socialist humanism. I prefer capitalist-bourgeois bestiality. To the hell and disintegration under the banner of the 'imperialist sharks' I can not oppose by comparison a more perfidious hell or a more disgusting, detestable 'morality' than the paradise presented to our European eyes (live and in its natural size) by these Soviets bragging about their superior social order! A superior social order in which — paradoxically — the poor in threadbare clothes, the starving masses, and the prisoners who groan under the yoke of K. G. B. tyranny are led against their own will by these police agents to demonstrations and parades and forced to hysteria, shouting slogans such as 'Glory to Stalin!', 'Death to traitor Tito!', 'Hands off Latin America!', 'Freedom and self-determination for the peoples of the world!' (peoples which really and effectively fare much better than the Soviet people and in certain respects enjoy freedoms they do not even know how to use).

"What do you say, young man? People have become so cowardly and idiotic that they let themselves — without uttering a word — be grasped by the neck by the wolf's fangs and led like sheep to the whipping post! Don't they deserve the tyrants? And the tyrants — unable to understand that life implies spontaneity of choice and not immutable patterns — don't they deserve the bankruptcy towards which their futile and dead decrees lead them, unquestionably and assuredly? God! To die for the sake of improving other people's living conditions while your own are below those of the cows tied to the manger is indeed a performance which the West will never excel in and

in which the Russians will always remain the consummate, unbeatable jugglers. Their dialectics possess the most precious support in killing the truth: Potemkin and Catherine with their cardboard villages, Ivan the Terrible and all the Romanovs with their Rasputins. They are pitiful, obscure schemers of the Eastern whip!

"Forgive me, young man, but in order to present my image and intimate convictions about this part of the world in the most concrete manner, I must resort to vulgarities characteristic of realistic-naturalistic literature and art. I have to tell you frankly one thing which I have the duty to repeat in front of all those whom I shall meet for the remainder of my life, whether they believe it or not.

"I was in Dante's *Inferno* and I did not lose hope! I lived through all possible vileness and infamy, all conceivable and inconceivable wants and humiliations deliberately practiced by the top Soviet officials (down to the last supervisor in charge of the German shepherd guard dogs)!

"Based upon the principle of Archimedes' screw, the Soviets make sure to suppress at the grass roots, any will of the millions of Ivans who with fear in their eyes — march to the beat of the brass band and chant whatever slogans the political officer tells them to, one hour before passing by the communist rulers' reviewing stand, draped in red. All these, I say, were felt, both by you and by me, on our own skin. Such things are unbelievable, and even as one is living through them, they hardly seem possible.

"Even imagination refects them because life itself does so, that is, the natural life of normal people, not that of the paranoics. They seem more and more unbelievable because their authors (the officials terrorized by the obsession to justify whatever they do) use an entire army of people — parasites — who strive to legalize in a juridical manner any tyranny, any caprice, any whim! Hence the sick necessity for codes, decrees, appeals, reports, statements, confessions, receipts, tickets and signatures. Hence the great tragedy of the entire revolution which does not retain anything revolutionary. After the blood bath of the October Revolution, the doctrinaires of the new world order drowned in a paralyzing swamp of a more cruel and killing nature than the Tsar's bureaucracy. Out of this came the need for informers and spies — garbage, failures of social life on all levels (even in the ranks of ministers) who — in exchange for the slightest advantages or the certainty of their own security and well-being — were ready to make statements and depositions

(signed under oath) justifying the steps taken against the humble Ivan and the decisions which led to the shooting of Kirov and Tukhachevsky, the assassination of Trotsky, the downfall of Molotov, the smearing of the glorified Stalin and perhaps the sacking of Khrushchev.

"Could you, for instance, deny that you have eaten Manchurian caviar when there are statements signed by all those who have left the Soviet Union by enlisting in the divisions for voluntary military duty against their own countries, statements backed up by the testimony of the commission which wrote the daily report? What can history say when a few beans were thrown into a caldron of boiling water, but the written record stated that people ate black caviar soup? That's what the record says, so therefore the truth is that people ate caviar soup!

"Does Dubno exist? It does! Do Donbas and Magnitogorsk and Azovstal and Uralets and other giants exist? Yes, they do! Were they necessary for the Soviet Union? Yes, they were! Did the Soviets have to have electricity and heavy industry? Yes, they had to have them! Well, the price does not matter! What really matters is the fact that they have been built. Have we proved to the world that we can build things? Yes, we have! Now, the fact that the industrial giant sustains heavy losses and that the mass-produced machinery coming out of one of its gates does not correspond to the sketches; and that through another gate, the same machinery goes back into the melting pots to be used as raw material out of which other machinery will be built — does this affect our budget and living standard? Not at all! We must gain experience! We must strain ourselves! We must learn from the mistakes of the past! Didn't the capitalist bourgeoisie experiment, too, at its beginnings?

"In such a manner — through reports and articles in *Pravda* — the Soviet government is justifying its failures. However, behind the curtain, the K. G. B. is busy questioning, from one administrative unit to the other, from department to department down to the unskilled laborer. Guess what? All those questioned have their own reports handy, written down according to Soviet law; all are armed with statements proving their innocence on paper! You see, they have learned their lesson, too! In the end, after months and months of questioning, amassing piles of adjudications, testimonies and documents (totalling hundreds of thousands of wasted working days), a general report concocts an imaginary blame due to 'objective causes.' If worse comes to worst, out of the few undesirables — some of whom must be sacked — they pick one or two rats who invariably get 25 years' hard labor and are shipped on the spot to somewhere near the Arctic Circle.

"You see, my boy, in this sort of business I find the only extraordinary thing accomplished by the Soviet leaders. The failure of all their attempts (which, as a matter of fact, costs hundreds of times more than importing the damned thing or resorting to hands and brains from a foreign country), this perpetual bankruptcy is presented by them to their own people (yes, they dare to do such a thing) as success and prosperity. Moreover, they are able to generate a general atmosphere in which everyone seems to be convinced. Some even believe it sincerely in spite of the fact that all around there is only ruin and a want which makes you cry!

"As I have said, this is what I admire in the Soviet system: the general lack of shame with which they bullshit! It is unbeatable and unforgettable in its uniqueness and magnitude!

"Look at the indolence which — under your own eyes — the Soviets adorn with the most democratic garments! Follow up their hypocrisy and their continuous double standard in whatever they do! Look very attentively at their paranoid mistrust of one towards the other and the consequences of a logic based upon fear! In this way you will quickly understand why they always try to eliminate all those who are too naive and show only the desire to oppose them. Because of this, after the division of Poland between Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany, Stalin killed, in 1940, 10,000 Polish officers in the Katyn forest though he formally claimed it was a Nazi atrocity and even convinced those unfamiliar with Russian practices that he was telling the truth. This shamelessness is the only quality one can admire in them. They are the new thieves of mankind whom one must fear even when they bear gifts. I wish Cuba were aware of what lies in store for her! The same goes for the Latin American countries, the Arab states, India, and all of unhappy Africa. If they could understand how much hate and ugliness lies under the honeyed words of the Marxist-Leninist theory of brotherly help!

"The other day you saw me with that thick Bible in my hands and you reproached me for wasting my time with trifles! I left you alone, to believe what you wanted to believe, but now I feel it is my duty to tell you the truth because you are young and it is a pity to let you die a fool! I wish that that book were the Bible, but it wasn't! It was *Matters of Fact About*

Tukhachevsky, and because I was very much interested in studying the magnitude of the shamelessness I mentioned, I patiently read the one thousand pages. In this book I found a luxury of details, facts, data and testimonies trying to justify Stalin's purges between 1937 and 1938 as well as the wave of terror which this tyrant — seized by fear — visited upon his country and army. The trial — which still gives me shivers — ended with the execution of Tukhachevsky and of approximately 30,000 to 40,000 Soviet military officers as innocent as Tukhachevsky, Yakir, etc. Do you think that Timur Lenk or Ivan the Terrible spilled more blood than Stalin 'the humanist' ?

"Tukhachevsky was just a victim of Nazi counterintelligence. Heydrich, the head of the German S. D., had been involved in the plot. Misled through false information furnished by Soviet spies — either deceived or bought by Heydrich — the fool at the top of the Soviet pyramid gave the orders for suppression. To stay in power, dancing to Stalin's tune, the curs around him prepared the documents and the formalities, staged a show trial and the official sentencing, followed by the blood bath, all this due to Nazi counterintelligence. The nucleus of the Soviet army was thus destroyed by its own generalissimo. The decimation used by the Romans and by Hannibal against some of their own troops who behaved like cowards on the battlefield was less cruel and, to a certain extent, right by comparison with what Stalin had done. And none of all those who were at his side showed the ghost of opposition. On the contrary, they might even have enjoyed the spectacle. Today I ask myself: Where were Khrushchev, Kosygin, and others at that time? If they were small and helpless, where did they subsequently get the power all of a sudden? From which heaven? How come their cowardice turned into dignity and a sense of responsibility for hundreds of millions of Soviet citizens and for the peace of the other three billion souls? I am one of these three billion, and I think I have at least the right to ask the satrap the above question as much as he does not have the right to take my head or disturb my peace. (Had he the power now, he would do it!)"

Whatever Doctor Sauer told me — I was not interested in his source of information at that time — proved to me that he was both knowledgeable and politically astute. I understood him even regarding the land-collectivization question which — to the astonishment of the Swabian minority and of all the inhabitants of the Romanian province of Banat — had been proposed by him (the respectable man whom the Swabians trusted most) without Russian intervention.

Later on, from authentic, reliable documents and sources — such as, for instance, Heydrich's infamous agent, Naujocks — I found out all the details about the way they succeeded in influencing Stalin and his hired killers to exterminate part of the Soviet army, especially its officer cadres, without the slightest hesitation. Everything was based on a simple forgery of Tukhachevsky's signature on a 1926 document, at the time when he was talking to the German Abwehr about a request for German instructors for the Soviet army and air force.

As far as Tukhachevsky is concerned — (in great haste, Stalin ordered his execution a few hours after the sentencing) — even Naujocks (a cynical and sinister Nazi agent) refers to him as a man of character. Educated in the old Russian military tradition, Tukhachevsky was well known to the German officers as early as 1926. Naujocks used his name because he knew that he opposed Stalin's plans for the Communist Party to hold sway over all of Soviet society as well as over the military. The 1937 Anglo-French-Russian negotiations — which caught Germany in an unpleasant political grip — led to the weakening of the Soviet military through a subtle trick causing the purge of Tukhachevsky and his "clairvoyant" entourage. Quickly and without any scruples, the documents were prepared, and Tukhachevsky's signature was forged on letters showing his link to the Nazi Secret Service. Then, after prolonged bargaining and at an exorbitant price, the documents and letters were sold to a Soviet agent who — very happy about his accomplishment — turned them over to the right party. Without hesitation, the Kremlin swallowed Heydrich's pill. Stalin dispatched his best military officers and . . .

"Glory to Stalin!" This used to be written in capital letters on every wall in the Soviet Union and carried on boards at parades. "Glory to Stalin!" Afterwards the slogan spread to all the socialist countries, even to Berlin. "Glory to Stalin!"

THIS UNIVERSE OF OURS !

This is an advanced century we live in! We fly to other planets. What tremendous possibilities man — really a very small creature — has! But how stupid, base, disgusting and contemptible man still is!

I recall a few instances of reprobation against modern European

civilization, against its culture, arts, and sciences which — opposed by Jean Jacques Rousseau, who advocated the myth of returning to primitive life — can not bring the nobility and purity towards which man has aspired. I wonder if this perennial rebel could have preserved his serenity and protesting academicism had he lived in our times!

"This Universe of ours," says Rousseau, "this stage of errors and misery makes us deplore the sad destiny of man by merely contemplating it! We live in the climate and in the century of philosophy and reason. The lights of all sciences seem to merge into one single entity in order to open our eyes and to guide us through this obscure maze of human life. The greatest minds of all times join their efforts aimed at instructing us. Huge libraries are open to the public. A multitude of colleges and universities offer us — even in childhood — the experience and wisdom of four thousand years. Immortality, glory, riches, and often honors are the prize of those most dignified in the art of instructing and enlightening people. Everything contributes to perfecting our understanding and to bestowing upon everyone anything that can shape and cultivate reason. Have we, as a consequence, become better or wiser? Are we better aware of which is our road and what the end of our short stay in this world will be? What have we gained from all this futile science if not quarrels, enmities, incertitudes and doubts?"

What would old Jean Jacques have written had he lived today? We should know that, during the time of this forefather of the beatniks and hippies (who protest against civilization, which infringes upon the happiness of man) — by the way, Jean Jacques dared to attend the stage performance of his work *The Village Soothsayer* at the Paris Opera, dressed as a hermit with beard and uncombed wig — the terror of royal absolutism was not exactly as described in most history books.

Had Jean Jacques lived in the Soviet Union, he would have witnessed two differing communist rules. Since the Soviet Revolution, no one from the multitude was allowed to wear tie and hat because they represented the bourgeoisie. Now, those in the Soviet government and their lickspittles are allowed to wear them at official receptions or when sent on official missions to the West. (Subsequently, the right to wear tie and hat was restored on May 1, 1954, on the occasion of the working-people's parade in Moscow, in front of the Lenin and Stalin mausoleum from which the representatives of the Soviet government watched the parade wearing more conservative

clothing rather than Stalin-style, neck-tight jackets and "revolutionary" cloth caps.)

The forefather of the beatniks protested by dressing unconventionally. Had he protested in the Soviet Union, he could have been sentenced to 25 years for immorality or deported as a slave worker. Let us not forget that at the fall of the Bastille (during the French Revolution), there were in that fortress only a few guards and inside there was just one prisoner, a wan aristocrat who enjoyed being detained. This sort of game

ИЗВЕСТИЯ СОВЕТОВ ДЕПУТАТОВ ТРУДЯЩИХСЯ СССР

Photo of front page of the Soviet newspaper *Izvestia*, May 4, 1955.
Ties and hats were officially reinstated in the Soviet Union

had been played for some time by the aristocracy because, as a detainee, any aristocrat used to receive a life pension from the Royal Treasury which assured him an existence he himself could no longer provide for.

Again, let us not forget that during that terrible absolutism upon whose back is thrown all the guilt of history, the deeds of the minstrel Francois Villon from the gang of scalawags and highwaymen were possible, as was the existence of the ironical Monsieur Voltaire, whose friendship was sought by both the king of France and the princes of the Church. Regarding the much persecuted and hunted Rousseau, the documents prove that both he and the commentators on his tumultuous intimate life exaggerated by giving more weight to his difficulties and persecutions than they deserved in reality. As a matter of fact, during the most difficult circumstances, friends always turned

up and gave him support, hospitality, and sympathy even in other countries such as England, Germany, and Italy.

The warrant for his arrest — issued by the Parliament of Paris — was rather perfunctory because it was never actually exercised. It was more like a scare because the agents in charge of his arrest always took the utmost care to arrive at the respective place 4 or 5 hours after the disappearance of the culprit, who had been warned in advance. In other words, "revolution was made by getting a permit from the police" — as the Romanian writer Caragiale would say.

Can we compare the absolutism of the French kings — Louis XIV, Louis XV, and Louis XVI — to the "humanitarian democracy" felt by Trotsky, Kirov, Tukhachevsky, Yakir and the 30,000 to 40,000 who shared their fate, later also shared by Dimitrov, Nagy, Preoteasa, and others? What could Josip Broz Tito have told us about this Soviet humanism and brotherly love? O, had this cunning political fox written his memoirs! As a matter of fact, if any of the communist leaders — Soviet or not — summoned to orders at the Kremlin's conferences had enough honesty to confess to their humiliations, with which they paid for the "honor" of being — in their turn — small satraps, we would undoubtedly have a nice, new Nuremberg! And there would be plenty of work for Johnny Woods! Even post mortem! The "great reformer" Mikhail Gorbachev, for instance, started his political career as an informer assigned by the K. G. B. to a police unit whose task was to enforce the collectivization of the peasants. Therefore, let us stop talking about Rousseau and Voltaire because here and now, during the full blossom of communist humanism, their heads and tenacity wouldn't be worth more than that of any Ivan from those two hundred million alive, dead or starving somewhere on the flat Golgotha of Sakhalin, in the Peter and Paul Fortress, or in Novaya Zemlya. Yes, those starved into dystrophy parading to the sound of brass bands in front of the official stand filled with foreign delegates such as Togliatti, Thorez, Barbusse, Cachin and company, plus publishing and propaganda representatives from offices all over the world. The starved marchers carry red posters on which is written in huge letters: "Glory to Stalin, the wise defender of the freedom of peoples and of human dignity!"

Well, there are few barrels which remain whole after their hoops are split open!

I have read many articles signed by honest names, with enough reputation and with much experience; well-written articles to

which one could not add a word, and I saw these honest names making fools of themselves and abjectly humiliating their own personalities through such assertions as "I had the honor to sit at the same table and have dinner a few steps away from Stalin!" or "Light comes from the Soviet Union!" (also the title of a booklet of shame) or "In ancient times, the Assyro-Chaldeans and others like them used to cut off the noses and ears of the prisoners of war, who were tortured in different ways and taken into slavery. Today, the great, enlightened Soviet Union not only gave us the prisoners back, healthy and unharmed, but also gave them arms and a new teaching directing them towards the true enemy who had imposed upon us the Vienna Diktat. For us who had taken up arms against the peaceful, socially superior Russian people, these Russian people wiped out our war-reparation debts, in a gesture of magnanimity!"

Though these venerable names who wrote the above are well known in Romania, it is hard for me to spell them out. I had drawn light from them, and I could not imagine what forces drove them to shame their names by signing such unforgivable "truths." They used to be the torches for all those uninformed and unaware in their nation, and they were the first to fall! My heart aches! How could they afford to darken their minds when they knew that their spirits would shine all the brighter, the more they endured, the more they kept silent — deprived of liberty or beheaded.

I know that storms strike the mountain peak hardest, but man is a peak to stand against them! And when the gods — big or small — do not bring forth the fire and lava of the bowels of the earth — eruptions reserved for troubled times — the destiny of mankind seems more cruel and more wicked. Perhaps this is the reason for so much disorder, groping and confusion in the world. These skinny existentialists and all the spiritual impotents — who cry over their own restlessness and debase mankind — have understood something but are running away like cowards from the solution. They do not want to play games, to fight or to die. They want what has been long since solved. They cry and lament but are extremely slow in grasping the key and putting it into the lock of their own temples. Is there sense in life if you have nothing sacred for which to die, to suffer, to fall, to get up, to oppose something, to join something, to fight?

THE GAME

Just look at the horse races; at a football game; at a simple artistic display on ice or at the graceful movements of a gymnast performing on the mat or on the apparatus; at the most despicable poker game among cheaters or at a game of hop-scotch with squares drawn in chalk on the pavement by a 4-year-old kid, and you will understand that all of these have a certain duration including preparation, beginning, an increasingly thrilling unfolding, peak moments and a positive or negative conclusion. You win or you lose; and if you lose, you win experience for the race or competition of tomorrow when you might turn out a winner. This entire progress is only strain and will power to reach the end. Now think about your scientific conviction regarding, say, the material unity of the universe or the simple and naive discovery of Xenophon that there is no difference between rain water, earth, grass, fruits eaten by man, and man himself, who, in his turn, must die and rot in order to become earth, grass, etc.! Based upon this supposition, one tries to make gold out of milk or cakes out of matches.

It is the same game: strain, curiosity to know, to do, to be able to do. Games. Games for all ages. Games of all kinds in which new elements, conditions, proportions — real or imaginary, in increasingly different domains — appear and compete.

Everyone joins in this dance. The practical people play their game; the lunatics and the heroes driven by metaphysical aches play a different game; the surly and those bored by too much soft living devise their own games. Everyone according to his nature and habits. The games are so many they are hard to count: from the mathematical marvel of structures, alchemy, history, biology, psychology, necrology, astronomy, philosophy, etc., to the unforgettable peek-a-boo — the game representing the most symbolic step of mankind towards knowledge, the game in which, naively and mischievously, the child covers and uncovers his eyes with his hands, discovering and confirming through his peeking his own existence and that of those surrounding him (a fact discovered by the ancient Greek culture only at its peak, after centuries of debates and groping).

Playing a game but without being aware of it, the Greek culture impressed upon life the rectangular coordinates of the children's game of peek-a-boo. The baby in the cradle is aware

of his own game and when, later in life, he says "Let's play," he believes in his game, he has the certitude of each of his discoveries which he takes very seriously. If you mar his game or do not keep to its rules, by cheating or stepping cunningly over the chalk line, he becomes angry, cries, fights you or picks up his toys and leaves the scene.

All of us mature people — dictators or simple Ivans — unlike children, do not realize that we are playing the same game. We consider ourselves too important to call our activity a game. However, we do not believe enough in the righteousness of our activity to fight for it with the same seriousness with which we imagine that we sweat for the continuation of our game whose coordinates we strive to make absolute.

This is what the three aforementioned people surprised me with, and I have great difficulty committing their names to paper. The bite from the apple of the forbidden tree of knowledge has made them change their usual behavior and speech! Most likely they acted similarly in childhood! The inconsistency with oneself, the duplicity in all actions can not but lead to the existentialist marsh and the moral disfigurement — more or less serious from case to case — of the mature man.

The game is necessary to life and was born at the same time life was born. We do not possess the kind of eyes and mind to perceive the game though it exists at all biological levels and in the most diverse and specific forms of life, from tiny insects to man, who — in his specific game — has split the brick lying at the foundation of this world, the atom, and flies to other planets without thinking that this serious undertaking is a game.

Whatever man has done in this game born at the same time as life has added to it ever more complicated and refined patterns corresponding to his own sophistication. Nonconformity to a certain way of living led man to a conscientiously followed duplicity — first in a game, then in his own conscience. Little by little, man has grown like a mountain of snow, and the innocent game of the lamb has turned into the avalanche which has crushed Tukhachevsky and others like him throughout history.

People forget that for thousands of years all these complicated, mysterious conglomerates endowed with thought and speech have strived to discover their origin and its cause. People forget the writings of their predecessors expressing the inability to understand the metaphysical sense of each creature taken

separately. Regardless of the sharpness of their minds which tried to explain things, they could not go beyond a limited framework. However, within this framework, all things are intelligible!

Waiting in long lines for meat, going into bankruptcy, having a Mercedes or a miserable Trabant, all these depend upon human honesty. The possibility of any economic improvement will be real when all of us understand that the games we play must be childishly fair. The material pains are curable if people understand that cheating is futile as is the desire to please or to play first violin to three million other violins even if they are made of baser wood and less ingeniously built.

The existentialist restlessness or the self-conceited infatuation of the all-knowledgeable dialectics striving to go beyond our material framework (within which it has practically collapsed by plowing the sands) is merely scare tactics or show (according to the centuries-old theoretical findings of the wise men).

The games allotted to man are diverse and countless. Entire industries and stock markets have been created for this purpose. Some games are more sophisticated than others, like a song which surpasses other songs in beauty. There is a profession of playing games. The choice of games and their variety are not at all accidental. They define everyone in whatever he holds most intimate. They are also linked to environment, time and place.

I recall a game. The most strange and sinister game I have ever been acquainted with, a game which — I think — could not have been played in a different place but only there, where the circumstances of life (as strange as the game itself) could tolerate it.

By getting acquainted with this game, one can determine who the players are and where it has been played. Everyone joins the dance he likes most and puts on the coat which makes him look gaudy. Some time ago, in Russia, there was a famed group called the Tiger Club. It used to offer the latest variety of recreation and relaxation. Though long tolerated by the regime, it was officially forbidden after a few scandals broke out. However, it continued to operate clandestinely in a way similar to the bootlegging operations during prohibition in America. After prolonged overnight libations, towards dawn, the members of the club used to go to an accommodation set up in a shanty where the game started in a compulsory manner, as provided by the statutes of the club. It was a special game

called "the game of the tiger." Everything took place by candlelight. Everybody cast lots to choose the two players for that particular night. One player was the tiger, and the president of the club always gave him a hand bell; the other player was the hunter, who was given a pistol and a certain number of actual bullets. The arena was then emptied, the other club members climbing up onto some boards and beams projecting from the surrounding walls about halfway between the floor and the ceiling. All were drunk and holding bottles of strong liquor in their hands, clinking them and laughing merrily. As soon as the president called everyone to order, he snuffed the candle flame, and the hunt began with the first ringing of the bell by the "tiger." The "hunter" was supposed to shoot in the dark in the direction of the sound of the bell. The tiger lay down or hid or made various other movements, frequently changing his direction and his distance from the hunter and then ringing the bell again.

The rules of the game were very precise concerning the tricks the tiger could use to deceive the hunter, as well as the hunter's obligation to shoot after a certain number of rings and the penalties imposed for breaking the rules. Any shot fired without hitting the target led to the switching of the parts, and the game continued until one of the players was dead or wounded or until a certain number of rounds had elapsed. It was an absolute requirement of the club's statutes.

Another game — less spectacular and subsequently abandoned in favor of the game of the tiger — was called "Guess where happiness lies!" In this game — known today as "Russian roulette" — the pistol chamber was loaded with just one bullet (instead of, say, six). The person to pull the trigger with the barrel of the gun against his own head was picked out also by casting lots and did not know which chamber the bullet was in. In any case, this game was too boring and too personal and could never offer the thrill of hide and seek — like the other game — to those miserable spectators.

The story of these very-much-sought-after amusements was told to me — without many comments — by the former minister and president of the Siberian Revolutionary Committee, Ferdinand Ossendovski. These amusements were practiced by the Russian officers in the Vladivostok garrison, officers whose life consisted of heavy drinking bouts which turned to collective frenzy. Caught in metaphysical sadness and sudden fits of melancholy caused by the monotony of their isolated life, they

felt that the infamous Tiger Club, symbol of abnormal life, was the only way to fill up the inner emptiness and to overcome their physical repulsion towards any useful activity.

This being the game and the atmosphere which the Russian leaders and the middle classes indulged in, together with the army generals who competed in acts of banditry, stealing — according to the records of those times — entire trainloads of lumber and military and civilian supplies whereas the Tsar's court was strewn with intrigants and schemers; then who could play the part of the providential savior so long awaited by the Ivans strangled from all sides? What was the Ivans' game, between birth and death, in their brief spark of life? Here is what General Ronquerol, head of the French Military Mission in Russia, tells us in his volume *Admiral Kolchak's Adventure* (subtitled *The War Between the Reds and Whites*) — printed in 1939 in Paris — in the form of a report clearly showing the objectivity of the military man "avec la mefiance des généraux a l'êgard des politiciens": "What we lack" — the Siberians used to say — "is firm, good, and honest man." There are many good things in Siberia, but the most important ones are definitely non-existent: order and justice. Justice requires an iron hand, a providential hand to reform the customs and regain the general trust. Nobody could assure us of that or guarantee it! Neither the Tsar nor Kolchak, Simionov, or Skipetrov. Each used to portray the others as demagogues although, in his turn, each made promises himself without keeping them. The foreign powers — through their wait-and-see probing and through the obstacles raised to one another — created only confusion and hesitation and — most of all — distrust.

The Bashkirs, the inhabitants of the central and middle Ural region, are not Russians by either customs, race, language or national aspirations. Oppressed for centuries by the Tsar's government, they achieved a certain autonomy in 1917, with the Revolution, but they were constantly looked upon with loathing and hostility by the Russians — a fact which made them angry. The White Russians blamed them for the Orenburg disaster. In fact, the defectors were not from among the ordinary soldiers but from among the improvised military commanders who had neither knowledge nor conscience. This was the real cause of that disaster. Hatman Dutov was good at political maneuvers but not at military ones. And the head of the general staff did not have even an approximate idea of the number of his military troops or their positions. Everyone was driven by

ambition, glory, greed and money! In addition, it was difficult to lead troops who lacked confidence in themselves and were not eager to fight. The same could be said about the Reds, but the toughness of their discipline gave them some advantage. The combat value of both belligerents was mediocre, and a single Western division could have defeated both Reds and Whites together. This was the opinion of all the foreign military experts present there. Losses were very heavy due to the cold and lack of clothing. Entire trainloads of clothes were stolen and never reached their destination. Losses by actual shooting were minimal.

The truth is that there was no battle front in 1919. All the Czechs did was to safeguard the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Czech troops had been chosen because at that time there were no other trustworthy troops to perform this vital service for the Tsarist army and government. Meanwhile, ambitions and intrigues were more frequently displayed. The White Russians — misled by England and America — turned to Japan for help, and the cabals kept replacing capable commanders with totally incompetent opportunists. Inertia — so dear to the Russian character — was being encouraged by the contradictory orders of the army commanders, who were never in agreement. Admiral Kolchak used to give orders over the heads of the general staff, which, in its turn, disregarded Kolchak's orders. As a matter of fact, over his orders, four different kinds of directives coming from four other adjutant generals were given. These generals were stationed in the city of Omsk, which was overcrowded with military officers with or without assignment. Used to living through intrigue, the Russians around Kolchak (like Russians everywhere) took care of their personal business under the guise of patriotic duty. The rebellions within the White Russian army became more frequent, in direct proportion to the shortcomings and failures. One major shot his superior officer — a colonel — and fled together with his troops to the Reds.

The rebellions of the Ukrainians and of the ruthless, plundering Cossacks — who forgot that the Reds even existed — made the situation worse. Self-inflicted wounds were on the rise, and arbitrary rule began. The Cossack gangs became true rulers over immense territories which they began to plunder without scruples.

Kolchak was living in a permanent feast in his eastbound train followed by other special trains, among which one was loaded with gold (Kolchak was always worried about this one), followed by 200 other trains loaded with supplies which no

one could defend or direct because Kolchak's personal trains had to have priority. As a result, the supply trains fell into the hands of the Reds.

Very soon, a man from Kolchak's entourage disappeared, taking with him 4 million rubles.

Another general, by the name of Diterich, also had a personal train and a personal gorilla bodyguard with the rank of captain, who took care to make anyone his boss pointed at disappear.

The ruthlessness and corruption of Kolchak's administration in Siberia aroused all the Siberian population — thirsty for justice — against Kolchak. The Reds were awaited as true saviors. The war itself was a strange one: Days passed without a single shot being fired along an outstretched battle front marked only by the opponents' signs — small white or red flags. To the Siberian natives, the Reds often appeared more humane than Kolchak's administration.

Treasons and desertions to the more powerful faction — an old Russian and Asiatic habit — came one after another while Kolchak, Simionov, and their common ally, in charge of maintaining order — the bandit Skipetrov — had only one order to give: "Hang them! Hang them!" and "Hang them!" Simionov became thoroughly odious by drowning his prisoners in Lake Baikal.

Properly speaking, it was difficult to find reasons to support either the Whites or the Reds on humanitarian grounds. Both were equally violent and used the same bloody means. There was only one way to stop the onslaught, and that was for the Western Powers to have taken over Russia. But this could have happened only until 1918. Law and order could undoubtedly have been established in Russia had the Western Powers acted in consensus and without intrigue. After the end of 1919, it was already too late. Even if all the Western Powers had wanted to, they could not have established order in Russia after that date. Unfortunately, everyone had specific private interests, and a consensus regarding steps to be taken was not reached. Had the Czechs themselves made the unwise move to enter that hornets' nest, they could not have come out alive! One must not forget that in Russia there is a habit which is difficult to renounce, even for a prince of the calibre of Grand Duke Nicholas, who made a considerable fortune during the 1877-78 campaign against the Turks as commander-in-chief of the Russian troops. This theft was shamelessly justified by the Grand Duke's adjutant, who said very candidly: "You see, the

Grand Duke's fortune does not come out of his salary but out of his percentage from all army supplies."

The blame for the rise of Communism in Russia lies, not only with England, America, and Japan, but also with Germany, which had very influential agents in Kolchak's government and even in Japan. At the bidding of the German government, these agents used all their leverage to prevent any kind of intervention in Russia even though Germany herself did not have the military strength to help her gain a certain influence from which economic or political advantages could have resulted.

Suffice it to add one new element to form a more complete image regarding the general atmosphere against whose dark background our passage — without a passport — through this huge country took place. I am referring to the most despicable kind of people and to the degrading game played by them: the informers, the panderers who always play the game of those whom they fear most or of those who pay them. These are indeed the basest people upon whose evil service any terrorist political regime relies. People of this kind are always ready to change their master, whose appreciation they know they can not get. This is perhaps the only game which hunts life itself and which is alien to animals. It is entirely an invention of the political man. There are people used and paid in the most diverse ways by officialdom in order to oppress or punish those who have dared to try to reclaim their trampled rights.

Pretending to work with us, the informers were in covert contact with the secret police. Sometimes the informers themselves provoked dissension and — as agents provocateurs — managed to infiltrate the faction's leadership and give the government justification for armed intervention. This kind of Byzantine treachery has characterized the domestic and foreign policy of the Soviet Union for centuries.

Ruthless gangs, the dregs of society, the most dangerous escaped convicts, the most notorious drunkards having no aim in life were unleashed against law-abiding people. I witnessed such anarchy led by the most ferocious and immoral of men through whom the Soviet government preached the formation of a just social order. In order to achieve their political goals, Lenin and Trotsky put the power into the hands of criminals, whose blood lust was soon aroused! The awakened beast cried out for these criminals' service! All kinds of exalted people and all the dregs of society gathered under the banner of socialism and righteousness, but they paralyzed any righteous action by

undermining it. Something unimaginable happened when the Soviet Revolution released all the criminal offenders. What thirst for mass revenge, or what witnessed bloodbath unleashed — through the Revolution — the revengeful actions of the prisoner portrayed by the Russian writer Chekhov in the Sakhalin hell, for example?!

The mild and witty physician from Taganrog — the town situated at the Azov bend where, around 1926, German engineers had built the giant of Azovstal for the benefit of the new Soviet state — gave us precious details which we take the liberty to present here for a better understanding of all the facts: "Three times a year, cruise ships leaving the Odessa harbor carried in their bellies wretched convicts for the cursed island of Sakhalin. Chained 4 or 5 together, locked up in iron cells, under the eyes of the most ruthless military guards (always with their guns loaded), these unfortunate slaves used to cross the Tropics and the Equator twice and reach the Pacific in unimaginable dirt and misery. How many hundreds died and were thrown overboard! (The desirable end from the government's viewpoint. It saved expenses and future trouble.) Chained together, sick, exhausted by the lengthy trip, some of them happened to fall from the ships into the sea during the unloading of the 'cargo.' The waves swallowed them up! The hell with them! It was no big deal! Nobody intervened on their behalf or made any attempt to build a dock.

"Volumes could be printed" — Chekhov writes — "just about the indifference of the administration of the prisons or about the deaths of hundreds of chained prisoners in the collapses of the mine galleries. The conditions for forced labor were terrifying. The climate was depressing. The thirst for liberty and the madness of desperation led to daring escapes and to rebellions which ended also in death . . . in quieting death!"

I should add here that we were not criminals but prisoners of war and political deportees. However, our treatment by the Soviets did not differ at all from that applied by the Tsars to their political prisoners, a treatment which the Tsars passed over to the Soviets, who stuck to it. This makes one suppose that "what is bred in the bone will not go out of the flesh" — a proverb which the chaotic mosaic of this story strives to prove through the unfolding of a main thread.

"The troops in that region were picked" — Chekhov continues — "from among the worst and most recalcitrant

soldiers in Russia and Siberia. We had only Mongols — some 'selection,' no kidding: battalions made up of confirmed criminals. These units had themselves been punished with a very severe regimen, and their soldiers had all the interest in the world in competing among themselves in cruelties so they could be fully deserving of the awards and good will of their superiors, who had also fallen into disfavor with the central authorities.

"In order to get out of that hell, the soldiers competed in severity and merciless cruelty towards the detainees. A prisoner who rebelled or escaped and was subsequently caught was given unimaginable punishments, carried out by the guard himself, who, in his turn, was also punished for lack of vigilance."

After being whipped (a common punishment), the regimen became more severe for those punished detainees who survived. Usually, whipping was the last punishment in Ivan's life even if he was a serf on the land of the noblemen.

Regarding the knouters, they belonged to a special class of people — the most hated and despised. This class included the worst and most terrifying criminals. They had a special regimen and were segregated from the others because they would have been killed otherwise. They were also used to give corporal punishment to soldiers and even to clerks from the administration (when they were blessed with this whipping happiness). For this kind of "service," they were given bonuses, and their sentences were reduced. However, after release they could only become colonists around the prison or mine. (Under the Soviets, the released detainees are given forced residence in circumstances similar to those of their imprisonment.) They preferred to remain inside the prisons instead of becoming colonists. They were sure that the prisoners' vendetta — sanctified by tradition through secret oath — would not miss them if they became colonists.

During 25 years, just one knouter had the guts to defy tradition and to get out of the prison premises, enjoying the rights of a colonist.

This dirty profession had its own risks. If after 15 lashes or blows, there was no blood spouting out of the detainee's back, the knouter himself took the detainee's place and was, in his turn, whipped. The new knouter was picked out from among the survivors of former whippings! What diabolical imagination! The minimum number of lashes or blows was 50, and the maximum could reach as high as 300. The whip was made of

elastic willow fibres previously boiled in sea water. The maximum punishment used to be carried out in two consecutive sessions. If the victim fainted during the first session, he was treated on the spot so he would recover for the second round of lashes, which followed immediately. After such whipping, the detainee would die due to the hemorrhage caused by the whips or due to unbearable pain.

Chekhov's story about the Sakhalin detainees ends in a warm plea for humanitarianism. Indeed, man's mind devised something which illustrates the worst sickness of the human soul: the 15-kilogram chain.

All these detainees mentioned by Chekhov were transferred to continental Russia in 1905 because the Russians feared a Japanese attack. They managed to escape during World War I and grouped themselves in gangs roaming through the marshes and woods near the rivers Lena and Amur. The future king of the Eskimo tribes, Jan Weltzel, had to deal with them. The battles of the natives, and especially of the Cossacks, against these gangs lasted until the Kerensky government granted them amnesty and they took residence in various towns.

Now, the Bolsheviks appealed to them — as I mentioned before — and gave them a free hand in the fight for the overthrow of the Tsar's government and its servants — small or big — who had tortured them. Half beast, half human being, these former deportees from Sakhalin became the most faithful executioners of the dispositions of the new communist tsars. Appointed as heads of supreme courts, heads of investigation commissions and Cheka organs, they had the chance for full revenge against the former Tsarist officials. And they faithfully served the new communist order. Had they been sworn to imitate the Tsarist Okhrana's policies, they could hardly have done a better job.

By encouraging the cruelties and excesses of the man-beast, the Soviets do not distinguish themselves from their predecessors. The red thread from Timur Lenk continues to be spun but with more persistence and with a technique based upon psychological-scientific refinement. The only difference from the old order resides in the fact that those punished are not highwaymen and criminals but the petit bourgeoisie (merchants and small-business men) and the intellectuals (professors, teachers, writers and artists) who do not want to sing the new Soviet tune. With most of the nobility, the Soviets did away with them very quickly before they could run away to other parts of the world. All those who

thought that it was still as it had been under the Tsar and tried to say something — even jokingly — against a simple decree or to oppose the latest appointee of the new communist tsars, were handed over to the "escaped people" from Sakhalin. And the formerly whipped knew how to whip one hundred times better. This is what the Great October Revolution and the victorious Soviet Union have accomplished since coming into existence until today when I am writing these lines. Speaking without any bias whatsoever, I can say that this is what the Soviet Union has managed to accomplish. Silly, isn't it? Another dream of mankind gone with the wind! But this crime will definitely find the proper judgement and the proper avengers!

HOW HAPPY TO BE YOUNG !

How happy to be young as I was at that time and to have the luck to meet, during those times of desperation to which circumstances had taken me, other true people, that is people destined by fate to suffer and whose souls — durable as flint — kindle the brushwood of hope, on top of which they keep pouring (with understanding and much warmth) all that is best in them: knowledge, firmness, rectitude, courage, and love (even when some of us did silly things). I had the luck to come across noble people. (The fact that the name was Pyotr Ivanovich did not matter.) Regardless of their nationality and language, these people find and recognize each other, and, sneaking through tens of thousands of dregs in shabby clothes, they get together and silently oppose evil, protecting others from it too, especially the young.

They have something which sets them apart: a certain look, a peculiar kind of reaction, sometimes a restraint, sometimes a certain kind of audacity. In any case they always fit perfectly into the course of events. Sometimes their indifference is so ostentatious that it tells you more than violence or loud reproach. Sometimes their look invites you to get closer to them. They feel the need to comfort, to spoil, to admonish. Never maliciously! Very strange, these great people with rich souls! Why do they need children? I noticed that even some of the wicked people need children.

My little schooling was gone by now. My true schooling was done during the war and during the time after my side lost the war, beginning with my being wounded and my hospitalization.

Then the happenings — some more unexpected than others — and the people I came across who were better teachers than those my father would have picked out and paid well for me. Knowledge entered my mind and stuck there, unlike during my school years. But more precious than the knowledge imparted to me warmly and directly by all my Aristotles from the agora of the Arctic Circle was the way they taught me to behave, teaching me — by their attitude — to be a true man. Besides, because I was too foolish and embittered by the prisons I had gone through — where other teachers had taught me to use the knife — they taught me to restrain myself, to use the knife very seldom and, if possible, not at all. I thought I had to keep my weapon, though perhaps not always, and that not everything could be solved by the beast. "Est modus in rebus," Doctor Rubinstein used to tell me. From him I learned that the maximum satisfaction for a man can not be attained unless he is at least as useful to his kind as the toilet which "as you could see," added Doctor Rubinstein, "I am cleaning as scrupulously as I used to study, conduct experiments or cure people. Without loathing or feeling humiliated. On the contrary, the stupidity of those who think they have humiliated me elevates me and, as far as they are concerned, I feel as much peace of mind as I have felt daily when the patient who yesterday seemed to be dying was improving his condition and turning into a man as strong as a rock. There are other things which bother me and make me feel ashamed, right now when — according to Darwin — I have just climbed down the tree, stood up on my two feet and called myself 'man'."

Well, after so many winding roads and so many encounters with men telling strictly authentic pages of history, the painful literature of that epoch, reprisals, revolutions and sometimes a little bittersweet philosophy — jumping from one corner of the world to the other, from Rurik and his Viking ancestors to the mummy taken out of the Kremlin wall by the mummy's successors — I have come back to the stoic Doctor Rubinstein and, at the same time, apparently, I am near the end of this interrupted Baltic intermezzo.

The people I had met made me jump — capriciously — as in a game of hop-scotch in which, in spite of the existing rules or laws, no one got anywhere or derived any advantage. If there was an end of the game, it did not lead anywhere. It was an illusion, and one could not have even the satisfaction of playing it properly. A painful striving in emptiness, in the zigzag

of history — monotonous, tiring and treacherous history — from which there is no other escape than the orgy of alcohol and violence, exactly as in the games of the Tiger Club.

Incapable of playing to the end the small games they engage in, but also incapable of a spontaneous effort to overcome immediate obstacles, these people metaphysically dream of "tomorrow," of "if," of the mysterious "beyond death," of anything that lies beyond human reach. And if these people are somehow caught in the exaltation or outpouring of love and pain for their fellow man, they destroy and kill human beings or — with the same unabated violence — they dedicate themselves to building Magnitogorsk-like power stations, monuments or social orders (of course, all of them miserable failures).

Painting by Julius Stuermer

The Russian peasant takes his dreams as reality and his life as an ugly sleep.
— Honore de Balzac

I can not forget the pile of electrical equipment, tools, household appliances and industrial machinery brought over from Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and especially from Germany, unloaded hastily alongside railroad tracks and left in total disorder in the rain and snow, for years on end. Wherever I went in the Soviet Union, I never missed such a spectacle. I saw electrical utility poles made of wood or metal which were lying broken, with their wires hanging loose as they had been cut. I saw entire fields full of trucks and cars piled one on top of the other. I saw huge electrical

switchboards whose joints still had traces of the concrete out of which they had been ripped. But what impressed me most was an entire field of Singer sewing machines near the town of Arzamas which had been left there for years corroded and encrusted with rust. For whose benefit? It is impossible to understand! The Soviets could have destroyed them in Germany and thus prevented the stoppages of entire trains and the exhausting of people during the rush of loading and unloading! Why? Why? What rules could this kind of game have? It is foolish business! Who devised it? Why? Who gave the orders to seize and transport all this to a certain place? For whom and why did all these rot — somewhere near Arzamas, thousands of kilometers away from the places where they had been stolen?

These sewing machines, the Tiger Club, Pyotr Ivanovich's stories, the behavior of Major Hirsch Gorin from Minsk, the stories of First Sergeant Sepcuta, all the quotations from Vidumas, Lyubova Dostoevsky, Chekhov, Weltzel, Ossendovski, Roenecke and Sauer, and all the fragments from the Baltic intermezzo and from these writings remind me of Timur Lenk or of Zhdanov and Stalin — the latest innovators of philosophy — and of Rurik and Gorbachev, of Vorkuta and Sakhalin, of the Bashkirs and the Czechs, and of people of any time or place belonging to this one-sixth of the globe. All these are linked together; they are related and outline the disgustingly cunning atmosphere sprung out of life's womb both in the past and in the present, after so much bloodshed. The state of the Singer sewing machines from Arzamas is directly linked to the structure of the communist social conglomerate whose peak-of-life records include the amusements of the Tiger Club in Arkhangelsk in spite of the fact that those events took place thousands of kilometers from us, half a century before us and in a social order which has been violently destroyed by another social order in the name of humanity, morality, justice and good taste dictated by reason.

The things I have seen could not have taken place everywhere! Where I have been, the centuries-old tragedies and violence, the gigantisms and the exultation of the paranoics, the desperation of the tired and of the victims continue with the same ups and downs — resorting to the same dialectics of masters and slaves — always reversing the parts played. The same dimensions, the same intensity.

THE FIFTH DELEGATE: DOCTOR RUBINSTEIN

I recall Doctor Rubinstein again. Sometimes he was enraged by the thought that German Nazism would take over Lithuania and the other Baltic states. He proved to me that the Lithuanians and the other Baltics had hoped to regain their freedom and national independence with the help of the German troops. But after pushing back the Soviets, the Germans, in their turn, dragged the Baltics into the concentration camps of Bad Verishofen in Bavaria or into the war against the Soviet troops, among whose ranks were other coerced Lithuanians and Baltics. Thus the Baltics in these two adverse camps were presumably fighting for their own motherland. However, both the Baltics in the German camp and the Baltics in the Soviet camp were considered traitors to the motherland by their masters. Which motherland? Germany? The Soviet Union? Which were the heroes? Which the traitors? The propaganda from both camps trumpeted only great and holy words. The turncoat leaders — protected in both camps — kept talking over the loudspeakers while the deceived, betrayed multitudes slaughtered each other. Of course, for the motherland!

But the madness of the war was soon over. The world knew peace again and a new slogan was launched: "We fight for Peace!" Strange association of words!

But we were at peace. In the Soviet Union, from house to house, Communist Party officials carried lists and gathered signatures. But the Baltics freed from Nazi concentration camps, the prisoners of war taken by the Soviets, and the deportees had reached other concentration camps with other masters, and from those camps they kept waiting to return to their childhood homes. The fear of the unknown waiting for them — they had dealt with the Tsarist Russians and with the communist Russians before — made them hesitate, unsure of what to do. This gave the Soviet middlemen a chance to play their dirty game.

Some of these prisoners had taken a path of no return, thus giving the middlemen the chance to collect a fortune. Others — under the influence of pro-Soviet propaganda carried on by different repatriation committees made up of Baltic nationals sold out to Moscow — accepted the Soviet deal, were allowed to go back home hoping for fulfillment of the promise of rights

to national self-determination, national independence, noninterference in their internal affairs, the guarantee of individual freedom and mutually advantageous relations, and so on.

"But the real show begins now," said Doctor Rubinstein. "The K. G. B. works day and night, overfulfilling the tasks set up by the Kremlin. People are incited against one another — knowingly or unknowingly — playing into the hands of the misinformation agents planted even in families. As a result, people begin to betray and sell one another to the K. G. B. which acts in the name of human rights (like the old Inquisition in the name of Truth)."

It would be interesting to establish how many Baltics out of 3,500,000 Lithuanians, 2,873,000 Latvians and 1,888,000 Estonians remained within the borders of their own countries and to ascertain the names of the "new Baltics," let alone the Germans in East Prussia!

The United Nations commissions, which merely kill time and waste the plentiful allowances mankind has put at their disposal to represent and defend lofty ideals, had never before asked themselves such questions as these. Therefore, I am asking them now, purposely of the United Nations Organization and especially of its Secretary General.

In the Baltic states the Soviets introduced their "brand of law and order." Under the charge of "American spy" and "traitor to the motherland" — a standard formula by now — the Soviets in fact deported most of the Baltic states' population, replacing it with other dislodged people, from other meridians and parallels, mostly Russians and Ukrainians.

Regarding the Baltics — with hair as blond as the stem of the wheat — I met them all the time in all the death camps from Moscow and Gorky to Vologda and Vorkuta. Alongside thousands of kilometers there were only concentration camps, mines, and prisons in which you could not but meet — among tens of other nationalities — five or six or at most ten Baltics. (They were never allowed too many in one place.) Tall, well built, with sad blue eyes, always silent and fond of working in the fields or on the boundless sea, these Baltics were not Latvians, Estonians or Lithuanians any more but simply numbers marked in the K. G. B. registers as traitors to the socialist motherland. Which motherland? Which socialism? Whose socialism? What does Soviet socialism have in common with these countries which never nurtured such thoughts and did not want this kind of social order?

Doctor Rubinstein — the fifth delegate of the 1939 commission which left Lithuania for Moscow to ask protection and incorporation into the Great Union of Free Soviet Peoples — continued to talk. From what he told me during our lengthy discussions, I clearly understood (and I can recall even today) that during the entire period of the war he had worked as a physician in the ranks of the Red Army and that on the front line he was awarded several citations and medals for medical and first-aid services. He entered Lithuania and Vilnius, its capital, with the first Soviet troops both as a Lithuanian and as a reputable physician.

"I was still waiting for the war to end. My ambition was to talk about everything I had heard and seen taking place. 'The war atmosphere is still prevailing,' I said to myself, 'but after the conclusion of the peace, things will return to normal.'

"I was appointed as head of a hospital in Vilnius. The hospital was directly supervised by K. G. B. headquarters and by their special agents. Whatever I had heard and read that the Nazi Gestapo did, was being done under my very eyes by the K. G. B. Regarding Nazi atrocities, I still did not know the entire truth, so I could not yet make up my mind about Hitler! But I saw with my own eyes what the Soviets were doing!

"The tortured detainees were sent to me, and I examined them to see if they needed further treatment. My position made me aware of all the transports of 'traitors to the motherland' leaving for unknown destinations in Russia. Very often I did not have a doctor to send as my delegate to medical commissions, so I myself took part and established the work classification for the human skeletons taken out of the Soviet detention and investigation prisons. I soon realized that no one from the leadership, yes, absolutely no one, gave a damn about the welfare and prosperity of the Lithuanian people, although they kept stating officially that they did.

"One night, while I was inside the villa surrounded by a beautiful park — you see, the Soviets gave me a villa and thought they had bought me, body and soul — I was awakened by the noise of a persistently repeated knocking at the door. Four people carrying two others who had been severely wounded asked for my help and threatened me at the same time. I was asked to hide them in my villa and keep my mouth shut — otherwise . . . I understood that 'otherwise' meant my immediate liquidation. Fear of death, or understanding or, perhaps, both — I don't want to recall what went on inside me — made me consent to

their demands. Those who sent them to me had advised them well. Undoubtedly I and my house could provide the best hiding place. A representative like myself — with official connections and influence with the Kremlin and with the K. G. B. — was safe from any suspicion, which also freed me from worry.

"From the brief discussion with the two wounded people, without too much being revealed, I understood they were part of a Lithuanian group of partisans or freedom fighters or — in Soviet terminology — counterrevolutionaries or bandits.

"They had fought against the German occupation troops before, but now, with the change of occupant they changed their objective: harass the Soviet invaders!

"I felt overwhelmed by the power of sacrifice and devotion of these Lithuanian patriots, and I conscientiously adhered to the fight for the freedom of Lithuania. I was accepted as a member of the underground organization which, at first, asked for my services as a physician.

"I never denied, and I shall never deny — regardless of the price I hope to pay — that I supported all Lithuanians who rebelled against the Soviets with whatever I could: money, weapons, medicine, shelter and food. My villa became a true hospital where I performed surgery for the Lithuanian Resistance whenever the need arose.

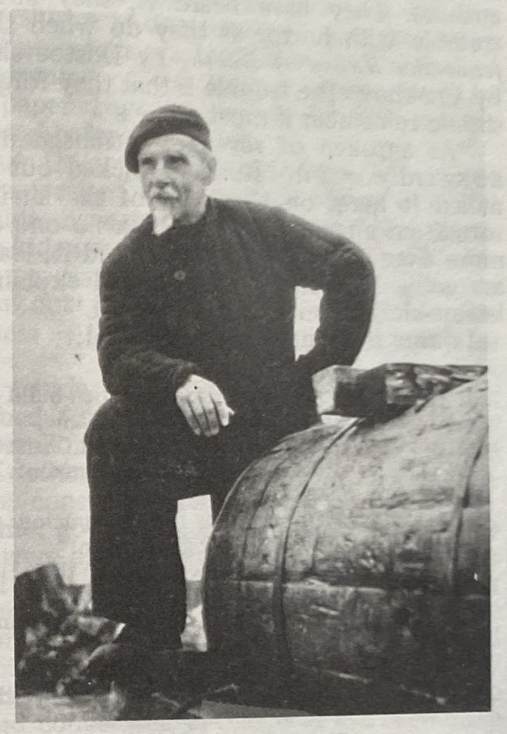
"But the pitcher goes so often to the well, that it comes home broken at last. To make the story short, I was arrested, tried, sentenced to 25 years and deported here, to Vorkuta, where in 1953, when the anti-Semitic fangs of the Soviets began to show, I was promoted to the rank of latrine-cleaning man (in which capacity you met me).

"You know the political Major Lieutenant Prokhurov! He is under special assignment to watch me closely so I won't shun my work, but I don't do any cheating. I clean latrines and eat bread — this dark, sour earth of theirs which seems to be called bread. The object of my cleaning, as you well know, has been eaten by Prokhurov and all the others like him. They've had to swallow a great deal from their masters in Moscow.

"I read in some Soviet books that at Auschwitz, the Gestapo and its guards took a devilish pleasure in humiliating the detainees by forcing them to carry out degrading work. At latrine cleaning, for instance — I read this with my own eyes — the cleaning men were deliberately chosen from among physicians, Jewish physicians, of course!

"Ha, ha! The irony of Fate is that I am not at Auschwitz

or Buchenwald, but I clean the Soviets' latrines! And what latrines! Disposed in four rows in the shape of the letter 'X,' each row with 25 holes. In packs! An entire army company ready to discharge simultaneously like an artillery battery! I thought about this, only the description of such a place, in detail, as people coming here sit and as the rows are disposed: two back to back with a passing alley between! Well, this architecture with all its flavor of promiscuity is well worth the money spent on it! I'd love to see Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt here!



The latrine-cleaning man, J. Schroeder (a great competitor of Doctor Rubinstein in this new profession). Vorkuta, 1954

"If I told all this to someone who never visited here, would he believe me? Will someday a fool come up and write about this as they wrote about Buchenwald and Auschwitz? Anyway, nobody would believe him and all his toil would be in vain! Who cares about poor Rubinstein or about you? People never learn what ought to be learned from others' misfortunes or from their own, even if they get lumps on their heads. Greedy and stupid locusts — as Mephistopheles from Goethe's *Faust* said — that stick their noses in every dungheap and then jump in the grass and keep singing the same song!

"Kid, I'll bet you anything, that very many people know and have heard — both from the prisoners and deportees here (who in the majority are very learned people) and from those who opened these mines and laid down their structures — *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (as famous in English Literature as Oscar Wilde, its author). They have heard it, they know it and perhaps they tremble with horror as they do when they read *Remembrances from the House of Death*, by Dostoevsky or *The Cursed Island*, by Chekhov. The trouble is that they forget all about it when they should remember it most.

"As a token of revenge, I translated Wilde's poem — rather awkwardly — into Russian, picked out a fragment from it and nailed it here, on the door of the latrine, on a scrap of paper torn from a cement bag. I think no one else honored Oscar Wilde more than I did in this way. Read it, learn it and remember it. I am going to recite it to you and explain it to you now! I, the latrine-cleaning man from Vorkuta."

I quote these lines in the original:

> . . . Every prison that men build
> Is built with bricks of shame,
> And bound with bars lest Christ should see
> How men their brothers maim.
>
> With bars they blur the gracious moon,
> And blind the goodly sun:
> And they do well to hide their Hell,
> For in it things are done
> That Son of God nor Son of Man
> Ever should look upon!
>
> The vilest deeds like poison weeds,
> Bloom well in prison-air,
> It is only what is good in Man
> That wastes and withers there:
> Pale Anguish keeps the heavy gate,
> And the Warder is Despair . . .
>
> . . . Each narrow cell in which we dwell
> Is a foul and dark latrine,
> And the fetid breath of living Death
> Chokes up each grated screen,
> And all, but Lust, is turned to dust
> In Humanity's machine!

WITHOUT FANFARE !

When — after some happenings with strikes and dead people, demands, shootings, questionings and new sentences on top of the old ones (all to be shown in due time) — I was taken away from Vorkuta, Doctor Rubinstein was still alive and conscientiously continuing the cleaning of the latrines whose doors he refurbished with torn paper bags on which he had written Oscar Wilde's stanzas quoted before.

I've never heard about Doctor Rubinstein since, but if not the United Nations Organization, then perhaps those who still seek Bormann, Hitler's aide; have found Mengele, the Nazi death camp physician; and have kidnapped Adolf Eichmann, coordinator of the Nazi death camp program; will be able to kidnap Doctor Rubinstein or take him out into broad daylight. If not for Nuremberg — as a witness — then at least for his own sake as a human being.

Regarding the Baltics, besides what I'll have to say concerning the strike (to be described further on), the demands, and the trial, I should like to recall now their way of putting an end to this tragic existence of detainee and deportee.

Since the Baltics were considered part of the Soviet Union, some of them wrote home, got in touch with those back home and, from time to time, were allowed to receive news and parcels (up to 5 kilograms) with certain foods, linen and cigarettes from relatives and acquaintances. (This was mainly due to the fact that they fulfilled their prescribed work quotas.) But time ground away their tenacity and their hope of getting out of the infernal region of the Arctic death camps. At best, they were forced to remain as colonists around concentration camps as had been done before, under the Tsars, with the Sakhalin detainees.

Without any fanfare, so as not to raise the suspicion of the K. G. B. special agents, and preferring the eternal ice of parallel 68 and even death, they used to exchange their bread and food for Russian tobacco — *mahorka*. Instead of food they ate a piece of soap or a spoonful of melted soap (the amount being increased from one day to the next) which in fact had been meant for the cooling of high-speed machinery. What followed was an attack of dysentery in the face of which the local medical teams — lacking adequate means — remained powerless. A collective suicide was taking place, a suicide which

reached mass proportions. These people who had lived in marshes and forests, harassing the German or Soviet invaders; these people who had fought with courage for their freedom (promised both by the Germans and by the Soviets), today did not have the courage to submit themselves to a decent ritual of death as they saw the Japanese doing. (With a courage sometimes spectacular and pushed to theatrics, though emotional and conscientious, the Japanese used to cut their bellies open by the ritual of hara-kiri, which to most of us seemed true madness.)

The Baltics didn't bother entering the forbidden zone, passing through barbed wire, and faking escape in plain daylight so they would be shot by the Soviet sentries and the observation guards as some Romanians and Hungarians did. The Baltics chose the road to slow, mute, obscure suicide, ending their lives in terrible pain.

When what had been going on with the Baltics became known, the K. G. B. kept silence, and, of course, the entire medical service did the same. Working hands were plenty! Glory to Stalin! The K. G. B. agents took good care that fresh, new merchandise was brought into the Soviet courts which, in their turn, delivered it promptly to the death camps, whose administration was ready to trade with the local beneficiaries exactly as slaves used to be traded in the old times. One, two, five, one hundred or one thousand prisoners died. It was no occasion for tears. It wasn't even big news. People are born and die. It is their game! For the time being, the K. G. B. is quiet and content. Those who died, died of "natural causes." They did not give their masters headaches because up to now, no one cared to find out about the number of the dead, and no statistics were compiled . . .

And all, but Lust, is turned to dust
In Humanity's machine!

END OF VOLUME II

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nations and people
decimated by the Soviets
and their struggle to survive

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